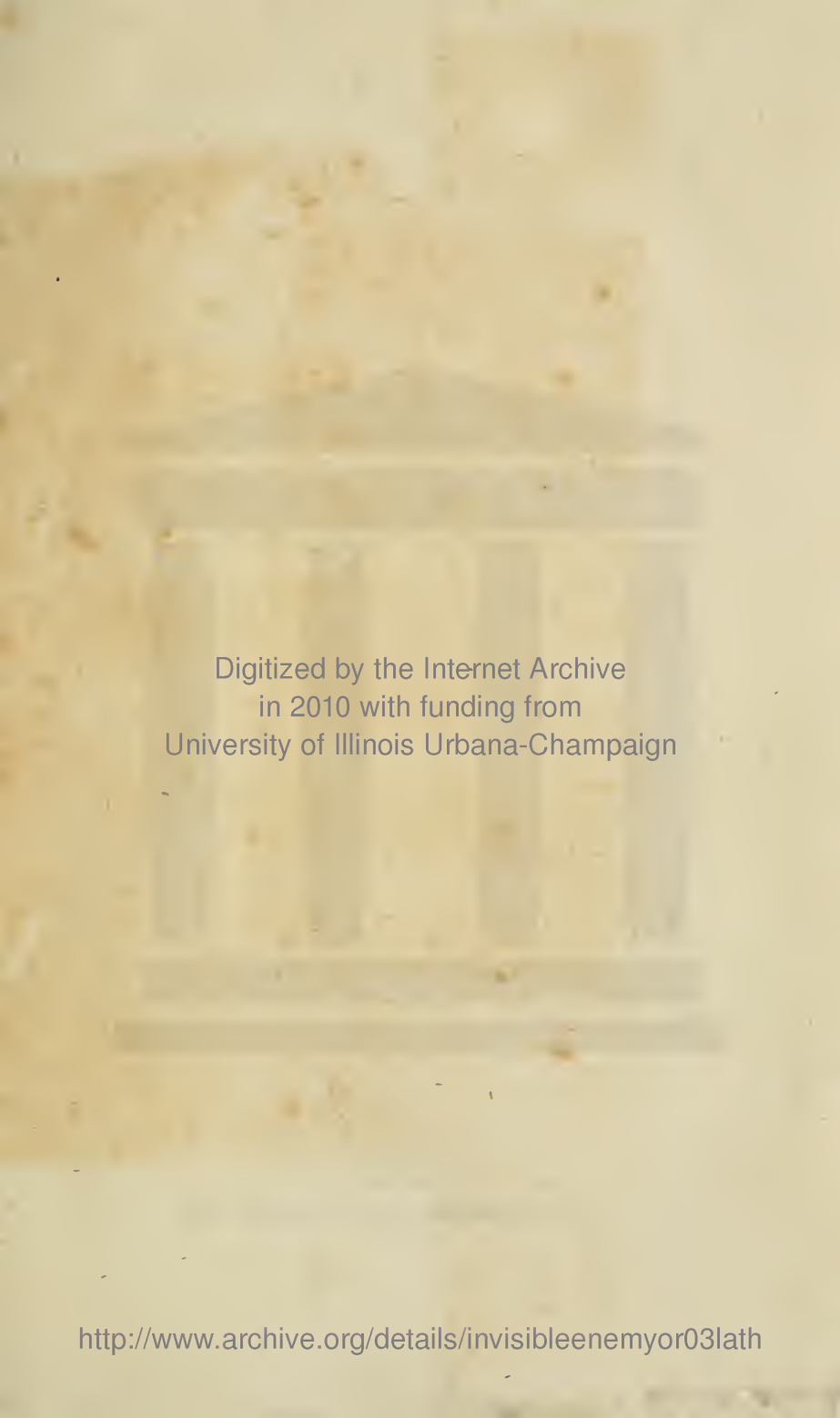


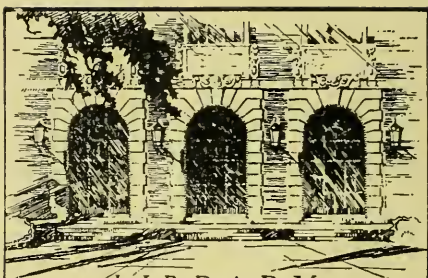


Eliza Giffard

Verquis Flintshire



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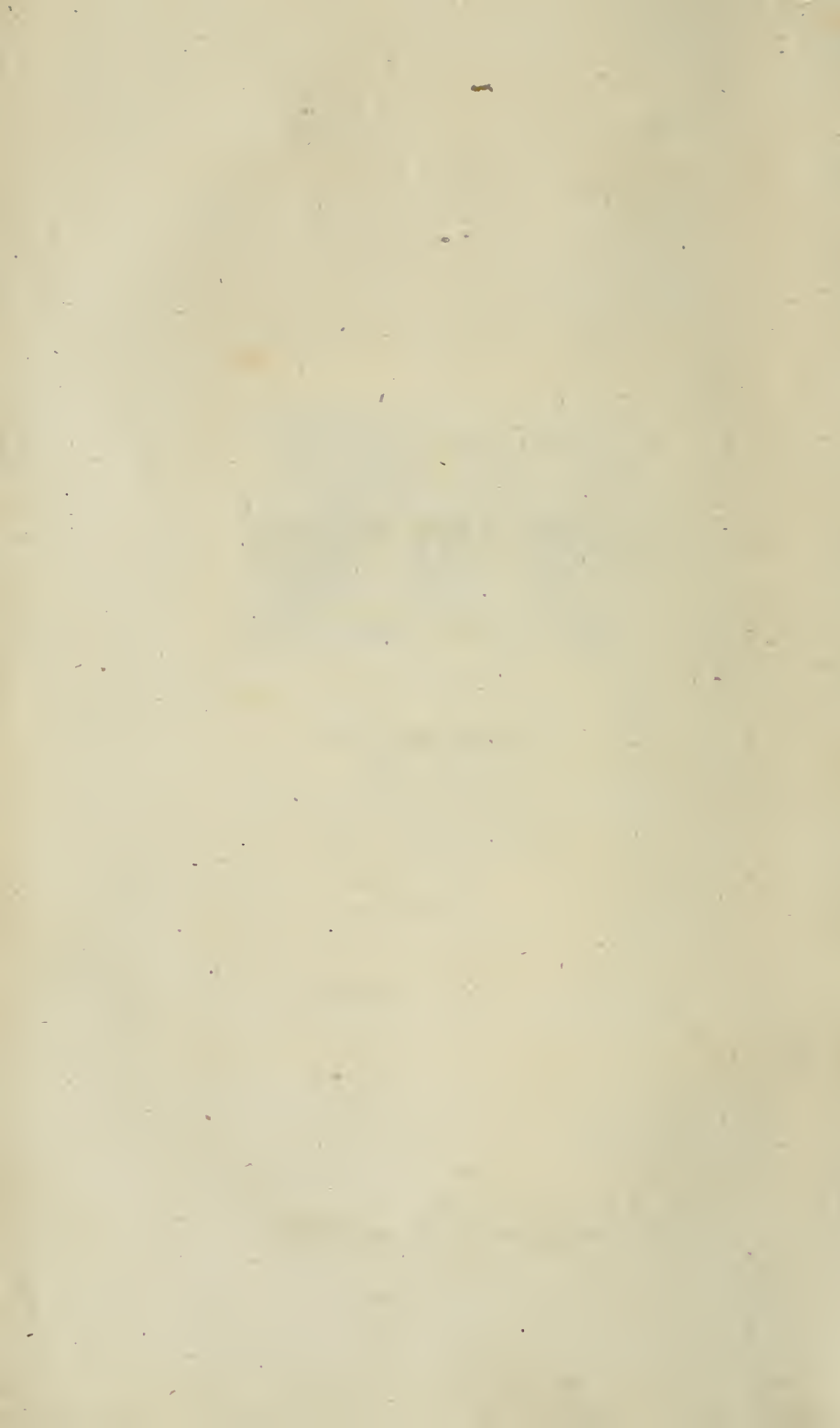
L348i

v.3

THE INVISIBLE ENEMY.

A ROMANCE.

Lanc, Darling, and Co, Leadenhall-Street.



Eliza Giffard
THE

IN VISIBLE ENEMY;

OR,

THE MINES OF WIELITSKA.

A Polish Legendary Romance.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY T. P. LATHY,

AUTHOR OF

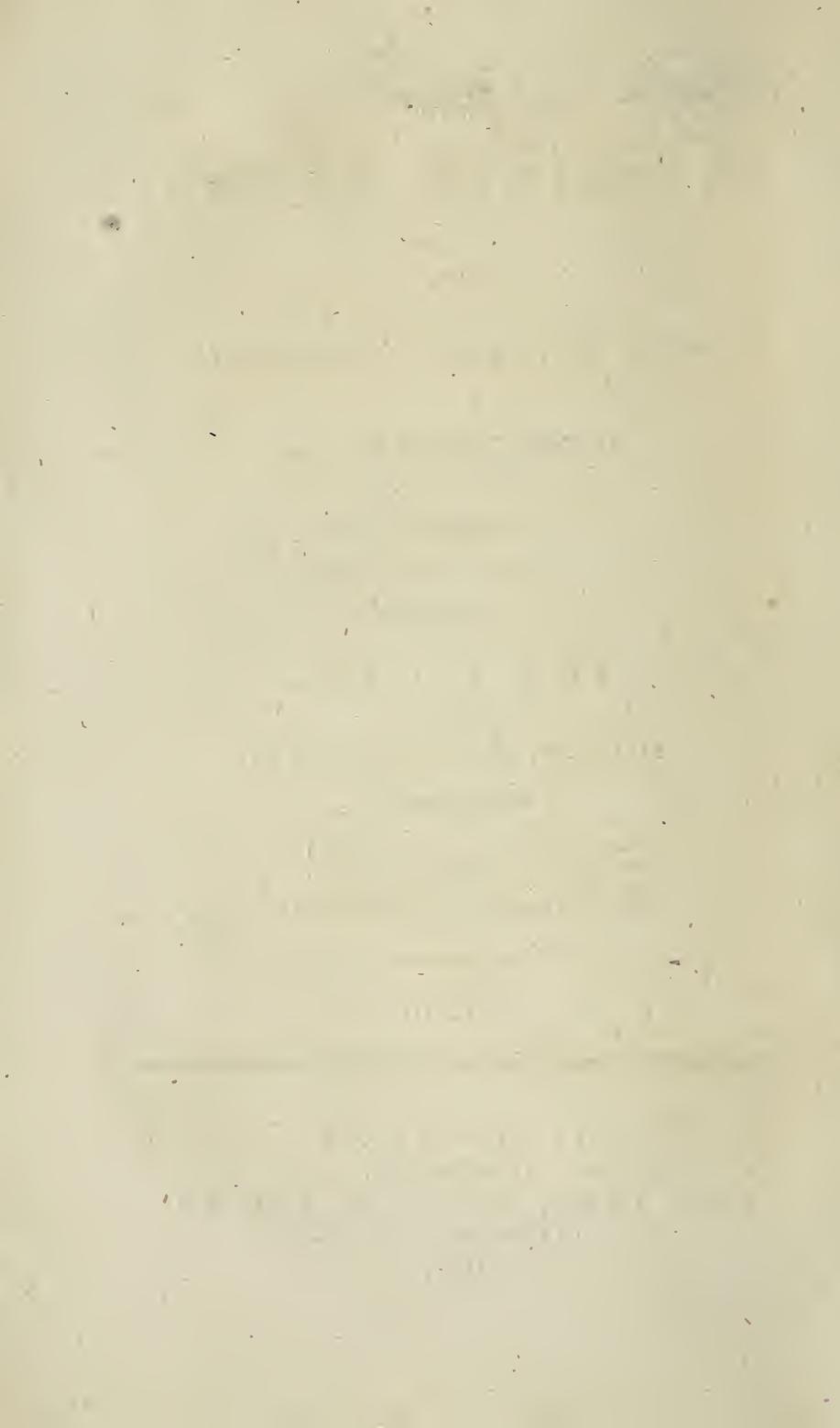
USURPATION, THE PARACLETE, &c. &c.

Nature! great Parent! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic are thy works!
With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul!

THOMSON.

VOL. III.

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LEADENHALL-STREET,
1806.



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v. 3

THE

INVISIBLE ENEMY.

CHAP. I.

THE arrival of her husband caused her to rouse from the lethargy in which despair had plunged her; his sight seemed to re-animate her—she wished to speak, but the words expired on her lips; she only pointed to her daughter, as if she requested him to save her life. Rosomaski threw himself on his knees beside her, and, embracing her, said, with a voice half stifled by grief and emotion—“Behold our preserver!”

No sooner had he uttered these words, than Paulina, who had scarcely lifted up her eyes to observe Giovanni, ran to him in an ecstasy, and falling on her knees before him, cried out—"Will you, Signor, preserve my dear mother? Ah! I am sure you will. I now recognize in you the generous benefactor, who presented us the other day with an hundred ducats in the jeweller's shop."

"My dear girl," said Giovanni, raising her, "if it please the Almighty to make me the humble instrument of prolonging her days, you may rely on my taking every step in my power for that purpose. Do you get your mother to take a little of the wine we have brought—the other things are not proper for her in her present weak situation. I will go to my house, and send her immediately some nutriment more easy of digestion: she shall also have some medical assistance. Do you yourself eat what we have brought, and endeavour to restore your own strength, that your mother,

ther,

ther, seeing you do well, may not have to languish on your account. Farewell for a short time."

So saying, he slipped his purse into the hands of her father, and instantly left the room, without suffering him to attend him to the door.

Giovanno's housekeeper was an elderly woman, named Agatha, who had taken care of him from his infancy; and his gratitude for that service was amply repaid by the confidence he placed in her, and of which she was in every respect worthy.

Agatha had a good heart, and a tenderness of soul above her condition—she was superior to interested motives; she loved her master, and did not abuse the confidence he had in her. She was so far from being presumptuous on that score, that no one was jealous of her—all the other domestics obeyed her without repugnance; and when she rebuked them for their faults, it was with that mildness which never created ill will. Every moment which the

duties of her employment did not take up, was employed in the service of the wretched. If her own little means were inadequate for any particular purpose, she would have recourse to her master, and her compassion rendered her eloquent, though eloquence was not wanting to excite him to any charitable purpose. Without education, the cause of humanity animated her; and nature, which inspired her, composed her speeches and formed her words, with all the fire, all the rapidity of genius. The most obdurate and insensible heart could not resist her descriptions. Many times, to the disgrace of those who, in the midst of opulence, suffer the tears of the wretched to bedew their cheeks without pity, would she give away the whole of her savings to relieve indigence.

Agatha scarcely gave Giovanni time to inform her of what he had just witnessed. In her impatience to go and offer her services to the distressed family, she interrupted

rupted him to ask the place of their abode ; and as soon as she had learned it, she left him to take with her those things which she judged would be most immediately wanting in their condition, and hurried off in the first coach she met with. As soon as she arrived, she no longer permitted either the husband or the daughter to attend the sick person. It was in vain to attempt to oppose her zeal ; she insisted on their taking that repose of which they must stand in so much need, and leaving to her the whole care of the sick person by day and night.

Giovanno paid them several visits, and had the pleasure to see that, through the skill of the physician he had sent, and the unremitting attention of Agatha, the whole of this unfortunate family were fast recovering from the waste which famine and grief had made on them. But what he had done for them was not enough to satisfy his beneficent heart : he had snatched them from want, but he wished to place them

E 3

beyond

beyond the reach of fortune ; he had dried up their tears, but he desired to see them in repose and ease. The picture of their late sufferings was ever before his eyes, and he determined to endeavour at perfecting the work which he had so happily begun.

There was a large suit of rooms detached from the main body of his house, and separated from it by a garden, where this family might enjoy every comfort of life ; but Giovanni, in forming the resolution of offering it to them, wished, from motives of delicacy, to owe their acceptance of it rather to their friendship than their gratitude. He had seen enough of Rosomaski to wish to have him for a friend : he found him to possess a noble soul, a frank character, a good understanding, disinterestedness, and, above all, a strict veracity, a great deal of complaisance without meanness, gentleness without weakness, and a proper pride without haughtiness ; but what pleased him most was,
never

never to observe in him a false shame on the score of his misfortunes, nor the littleness of blushing at the succour which he received. Nothing flatters a generous heart more than to witness in those who receive its benefits, a sentiment of honourable obligation free from servility. Rosomaski often spoke to Giovanni of his gratitude; but his looks were infinitely more expressive of the sensibility of his soul than his words.

“ When you quit them,” said Agatha to Giovanni, “ their constant employment is to discourse about you; the first prayers which they offer up to Heaven at the beginning of the day, are in your behalf, and in that manner they end it. It seems as if both father and mother would erase from the heart of their daughter the sentiments of nature, to leave nothing there but those of gratitude.—‘ O my child,’ said the respectable father to her yesterday, ‘ if I have given you life, it is Giovanni who has preserved it for you. Without him and

his benefits, I should not now, perhaps, enjoy the pleasure of holding you in my arms; the caresses of your mother would have been lost to you: let him be as dear to you as ourselves, and even as yourself. My child—my dearest child! never be ungrateful for so many benefits; if you should be capable of it, I should then hate as much as I now love you.'

In the mean time, the sick Rhodiska daily gained strength; the attention of Agatha, the pleasure of knowing that her husband and her child were happy and contented, and moreover, the satisfaction of seeing her benefactor every day, had driven from her frame the double poison of famine and despair. She might, without any risk, quit her apartment, and endure the movement of a coach. Giovanni waited only for this time, to execute the design which his friendship had formed of having them at his house. Besides, he was so sure of the esteem of those whom he had protected, that he resolved not to delay
any

any longer to procure himself the happiness of passing together the remainder of his life with those who now formed the principal charms of it.

In this resolution, he came one morning to Rosomaski, and said to him—"I have a little reproach to make you, for not having offered to pay me a visit. Your lady is now able to go abroad, without any apprehension of danger; come, therefore, and dine with me to-day: my house is, and ever will be, for you the temple of friendship: come and be convinced of it."

Two coaches were called, and they set off. Agatha, who alone was in her master's secret, remained behind to pay off the lodgings.

When they arrived at Giovanni's house, he conducted them to the apartments which he had destined for their use.

"Will you pardon me?" said he to them. "You are not in my house—these apartments belong to you; for I have placed so great a confidence in your friendship,

ship, as to presume that you would inhabit the same house with myself without any repugnance. Partake of my fortune; let us enjoy the only real happiness which there is on earth—friendship without constraint.”

Rosomaski seized his hand, and pressed it between his. He wished to speak, but the fullness of his heart denied utterance to his tongue. Rhodiska and Paulina imitated his silence, and shed tears of pleasure. There is no emotion more expressive than that of silent gratitude.

Giovanino had taken the precaution to supply every want of his new friends. A wardrobe, well furnished with male and female apparel, had been prepared by Agatha, without the knowledge of the rest of the domestics; male and female domestics had been hired to attend upon them, in such a manner as to give them to believe they had been hired by their orders. By this delicate *finesse*, every body was persuaded that the new comers, enjoying a splendid

splendid fortune, were friends of Giovanni, who were come from the country, and had desired Giovanni to procure for them a ready-furnished house and suitable equipage. It is thus that a noble and delicate soul foresees every thing, and spares the self-love of those whom it obliges, even the smallest mortifications.

The worthy Agatha would have been much grieved to have been separated from Paulina, whom she already loved as her daughter, and she requested to be permitted to wait upon her. Paulina was as desirous of it as Agatha; the care which she had taken of her mother, and the attention which she had paid to her father and herself, had all contributed to gain her friendship and esteem. Giovanni eagerly embraced this new opportunity of obliging two persons whom he loved, and Rosomaski and Rhodiska had an additional motive of gratitude: they beheld with joy their daughter in the hands of a worthy woman, whose virtues raised her above her

condition, and whose counsels might be very advantageous to their daughter.

Paulina promised, when another year or two should have matured her budding charms, to rank as a first-rate beauty. The bloom of her complexion, the freshness of her skin, the rosy hue which had now begun to resume their former empire over her cheeks, whence grief and want had driven it, attracted the attention of all beholders. She had not been instructed by art in the graces, but nature had amply supplied its place, and lavished on her those substitutes which created and fixed attention, affected the heart, and inspired admiration.

Giovanno's heart had never yet been wounded by the shaft of Love; the licentiousness of Genoese manners were not suited to his taste. He had seen several women, whose persons he thought he could have admired, but a nearer acquaintance undeceived him; he found it impossible to love where he could not esteem. He—

“ ——— As

“ ——— As yet, from beauty felt no pain,
Had seen no virgin he could wish to make
His wedded partner. Now his beating heart
Feels new emotion ; now his fixed eye,
With fervent rapture dwelling on her charms,
Drinks in delicious drafts of new-born love.
No rest the night, no peace the following day
Brought to his struggling heart : her beauteous form,
Her fair perfections, playing on his mind,
With pleasing anguish torture him. In vain
He strives to tear her image from his breast ;
Each little grace, each dear bewitching look,
Returns triumphant, breaking his resolves,
And binding all his soul a slave to love.”

DODSLEY.

The time, however, was arrived when he was to wear those chains which beauty imposed, and virtue rivetted ; but he did not know the full extent of his passion until the danger of losing the beloved object roused every spark of latent passion, and kindled it into a full blaze.

The delicate constitution of Paulina had been secretly and slowly undermined, by her constant attendance upon her mother during her late illness ; and although she
had

had somewhat recovered the waste of want, grief, and anxiety, yet the poison had gradually seized upon her whole frame. For some time she alone was sensible of her situation, because, unwilling to damp the yet youthful joy of her parents, she endeavoured to prevent her sufferings from breaking out; but the violence she did herself, only tended to increase them. She was at length unable to quit her chamber; and the most alarming symptoms of the dreadful fever from which her mother had so lately recovered, were visible to every one. As her parents never quitted her, Giovanni could with propriety appear in the room, and he seldom was absent from it, under pretence of consoling them. But whilst he was doing this friendly office, he stood in equal need of consolation himself. His eyes now, for the first time, began to open upon the situation of his heart; and he no sooner knew that he loved, than he was in despair, dreading a final separation from the object of his passion. She grew worse,
was

was delirious, and the disorder was now at its crisis. Giovanni, whose lately tranquil bosom was now the seat of the most tumultuous passions, began to act with so much incoherence, that his situation could not have escaped the eyes of any, except the parents, who were too much in despair themselves to make any reflections but on the present situation of their daughter. They did not even observe the alteration in their friend's countenance, who was soon obliged to keep his own room, having been seized with all the virulence of the same dreadful disorder.

What was then the situation of Rosomaski and Rhodiska, torn with agony and suspense, between their beloved daughter and their almost equally dear benefactor! They divided their attentions between them; they flew from room to room, and their exertions increased with the danger.

A dawn of hope, at length, began to break through this horizon, so bedimmed with the clouds of despair. The youth of Paulina prevailed over her disorder—the

delirium left her—she knew all who surrounded her—embraced her father and mother ; but there was still some one wanting, by whom she wished to be congratulated on her convalescence, and she had not the courage to ask for him. Three days passed without her seeing Giovanni ; she felt uneasy, but did not know the reason of her uneasiness. On the fourth day she could bear this suspense no longer.—“ Where is our friend, Signor Giovanni ? ” said she ; and as she spoke, a temporary red suffused her late pallid cheek. Everyone was silent. She scrutinized their looks—she read their anguish.—“ He is then sick ? ” said she.—No one gave her any answer.—“ Ah ! it is so, and you dare not tell me of it. He can no longer come to see me ; I will go to him, and repay that attention which he has shewn me at the expence of his own life.”

She demanded her clothes, that she might dress herself ; her parents endeavoured to remonstrate with her on her weakness, and the danger of a relapse.

“ It

“It is in vain that you would oppose me,” said she; “I will see him, though at the expence of my life; it cannot be lost in a better manner than in endeavouring to preserve him who has given us all life.”

She rose in spite of all their entreaties, persuasions, and attempts to restrain her; and her mother, fearing any longer to oppose such a steady resolution, helped to dress her, whilst her father went to apprize Giovanni of the intended visit.

He had scarcely finished his task, when Paulina appeared, supported by her mother and Agatha on either side. As they approached Giovanni, Paulina broke from them, and threw herself beside the languishing Giovanni. She endeavoured to speak, but her sobs choked articulation; her struggles became violent—her parents were dreadfully alarmed; a flood of tears, with which she bathed Giovanni’s face, however, afforded her timely relief. Those tears were infinitely more powerful in effecting the recovery of Giovanni, than all the prescriptions of his physicians. Death,
which,

which, but a few minutes before, seemed ready to embrace him, fled away at the approach of his mistress's arms, and left him to his best physician.

The scene which ensued not only gave Giovanni and Paulina to know the state of each other's heart, but also sufficiently disclosed it to the parents of the latter. They felt not the least alarm at this unequivocal testimony of their daughter's affection for a man of Giovanni's character. They instantly imbibed with joy the flattering idea of witnessing the union of two hearts, in which their own were so strongly interested. To have their friend become their son-in-law, and their daughter happy in the arms of a man to whom they owed every thing—of a man whom they esteemed beyond every other mortal, appeared to them as the height of earthly happiness, to which they might hope to climb in a short time.

It was with difficulty that they could prevail on their daughter to retire, after a visit of nearly two hours, and then not
without

without a promise of being permitted to renew it on the succeeding day. She rapidly gained health and strength; and as her visits to Giovanni were daily and long, he, as if his life depended upon her's, was soon restored to convalescence by beholding her. In short, they performed the cure of each other.

The candour of Giovanni was not to be exceeded by his benevolence; he was aware that the misery from which he had lately relieved his friends, entitled him to their consideration and esteem; but he also knew that those who receive benefits, have a right to be dubious of the motives for bestowing them, and to be cautious that their honour be not to pay the price of them. He thought they must have some uneasiness on the score of their daughter, whose tenderness even their presence had not been sufficient to restrain; and he held himself bound to seize the earliest opportunity of relieving their suspence and anxiety, by a declaration of an honourable attachment to their daughter, and

and an offer of his hand and fortune.— He did so, when only the father was present.

“ My dear and noble friend and benefactor,” replied Rosomaski, “ you may easily guess the pleasure I have received from your proposal, and at finding that we have still one jewel left, which you will deem worthy of your acceptance: we are not so poor, then, as we imagined ourselves to be. The alliance you speak of would be the *ne plus ultra* of our happiness in this life; but we must be careful that our happiness do not cost you too dearly. You shall, at least, not have to upbraid us with any concealment hereafter. I am going to inform you of the history of my misfortunes; it is an account which I owe you—not so much on your own account as on that of the public, who, without knowing the true source of our distress, will take upon itself to blame you for having made an alliance with a family which no one knows. You are aware that such is the injustice of the world,
that

that it covers the unfortunate with shame ; it renders them responsible for the evils which they endure ; and, to excuse itself for its own insensibility, it affects to attribute those evils to misconduct : it makes a crime of being poor, only that it may not have to blush for abandoning wretchedness to its hard fate. You will now see how the account stands between the world and myself."

Rosomaski then gave a circumstantial detail of all the strange occurrences which had marked his existence, from the very moment of his birth, to the time when his fortunate meeting with Giovanni was the means of rescuing him and his family from the very abyss of misery.

The sensations of the humane Giovanni were strongly marked, throughout the whole of Rosomaski's interesting narrative, by the effects which they produced on his features, either of surprise, admiration, grief, pity, horror, or indignation. Rosomaski had for some minutes ceased to
speak,

speaking, and yet Giovanni still preserved a profound silence, and seemed lost in a reverie. Rosomaski knew not to what cause to attribute this silence, and his sensibility began to be alarmed, lest his friend should be incredulous of the strange things which had been related to him.

At length Giovanni broke silence.—
“Is it possible,” cried he, “that human nature can inflict, and that human nature can bear, such severe trials?”

“Strange as the occurrences of my checquered life may appear to you,” replied Rosomaski, “yet they are too well authenticated in the neighbourhood where those scenes have passed, to make me entertain the least apprehension that my veracity should suffer in your opinion. My lawsuit with the son of the usurper of my title and possessions; the decree of the Chancery of Craçow in my favour; the proceedings of the magistrates of Zabno in the affair of the unhappy Theresia, are all upon record, and will afford undeniable testimony

testimony that I have been precipitated from the very height of ease, happiness, and prosperity, into the lowest abyss of misery, by a series of undeserved misfortunes—at least so I must think them, since I know not their source.—You are now,” added Rosomaski, “acquainted with every circumstance relating to us. If you have heard any thing which inclines you to retract the offer which you have made us, do not let a false delicacy restrain you. Permit us to return to the obscurity whence you drew us, with the heart-pleasing satisfaction of having once possessed your esteem.”

“My friend,” cried Giovanni, “I have heard the detail of your misfortunes—with pleasure, I may say ; because, I hope you will not deny me the happiness of putting an end to them, and repairing the injustice which you have received from fortune. I ask it as much for my sake as your own, since I feel that our happiness must be, from henceforth, inseparable.”

“Then

“ Then be my son-in-law,” said Rosomaski.

“ There must be no restraint upon your daughter’s inclination,” said Giovanni, hesitating.

“ I am sure,” replied Rosomaski, smiling, “ that there will need none.”

CHAP. II.

GIOVANNINO did not owe his consequence to his riches, but to the use which he made of them ; his virtues having placed him above his rank, he had acquired the right of being neither the flatterer nor the dupe of the nobility. He lived with them without ceremony, obliged them without interest, and

and with a proper respect for their rank, he kept himself always independent of their caprices. His immense fortune, and the reputation which he had justly acquired to himself, of being truly liberal and generous, had caused his acquaintance to be courted by the Count and Countess Del Piombino. They had found in him, not a servile *protégé*, but a generous friend, who had more than once rescued their estate and furniture from the rapacious hand of the law-officers and money-brokers.

They had a niece, Signora Moceniga, who was very poor, and they had charged themselves with bringing her up, merely out of ostentation. Her only merit, if such it could be called, was her noble birth, on which account she was vain, proud, and haughty to an excess. Without virtue or character, having a strong propensity to expence, narrow views, high passions, and low sentiments, she was not only ridiculous, but contemptible, and bade fair to be the punishment of a husband and the

pest of society. The aunt, who had taken her solely through vanity, had never cared much about her, and was now heartily tired of her, since she was become of an age to dispute with her the admiration of her male visitors. The Count, who was greatly indebted to Giovanni, and had no inclination to pay him, thought that to oblige him in his turn was an honest method of quitting scores, and this obligation was to be conferred, by permitting Giovanni to aspire to the honour of his niece's hand. He saw in this match the double advantage of procuring for his relation a rich establishment, and of getting rid of a creditor, whom he was unwilling to satisfy. The Countess the more readily acquiesced in this scheme, as she wished Moceniga, whom she now looked upon as a rival, out of the way.

Giovanni was not one of those who pride themselves on their connections with the great, nor who boast of their intimacy ; neither was he one of those *Philosophi a*
Illuminati,

Illuminati, who, wishing to overturn the order of society, would have neither a difference of condition, nor a distinction of rank. He knew that, as a social being, he owed a deference and respect to those whom birth had placed above him; that if he was their equal in the order of nature, he was their inferior in the order of society: but as his fortune put him above want, and he had neither ambition nor vanity, he thought himself above their protection. He had obliged the Count del Piombino and his lady without interest; he thought himself their friend, but not their equal. As the Count and his lady possessed the art of disguise, which is generally well understood among the great in a superior degree, Giovanni saw in them neither great virtues nor great vices. Those foibles which, they thought, need not be concealed from him, he attributed to their education, their flatterers, and their rank in life.

When Piombino and his lady had im-

parted to Giovanni their intention of bestowing their niece upon him, he had testified more gratitude than pleasure. The honour of a noble alliance did not flatter him; but as his heart was then entirely disengaged, and Moceniga had attractions, and, as he imagined, a cultivated understanding and a good heart (for her aunt had not forgotten to teach her, by her example, the art of disguising herself), he did not reject the proposed alliance. But the strongest impulse to his acceptance of the offer, would have been the goodness of his own heart; for he knew that Moceniga was without fortune, and her fate depended entirely on the caprice of others. He flattered himself, therefore, with rescuing her from this situation, and meriting her tenderest affection.

As he did not, however, feel the impatience of a real lover, he did not push the matter; and the Piombinos, on their side, thought it beneath the dignity of their rank to shew too much eagerness in an affair

affair which, according to their lofty notions, interested only him to whom they had proposed it. Six months had thus passed ; and during that interval, Giovanni, Rosomaski, and his family, had met together, and had united themselves so closely as has been already mentioned.

True friendship is not acquainted with disguise ; every thing is in common betwixt those whom it unites, as well sentiments as fortune. Giovanni and Rosomaski had concealed nothing from each other ; even the proposal of the Piombinos was known to the latter and his family. Giovanni had spoken of the proposed alliance only as a matter which concerned his future fortune ; but it was mentioned previously to the illness of Paulina, and at a time when Giovanni was ignorant of the real state of his heart. He, however, no sooner knew that what he mistook for the effect of a tender friendship for Paulina, was in reality a more tender passion, that he was assured of having his passion

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returned,

returned, and that his happiness depended solely on his own will, than the proposal of the Piombinos began to disturb him. As he had not rejected it, he apprehended that their credit and power would raise up obstacles to the union which he had resolved to form. His friends, Rosomaski and Rhodiska, who had at first rejoiced at the advantages which their benefactor, Giovanni, might obtain from his marriage with Moceniga, knowing that he preferred their alliance to that of the Piombinos, began in like manner to dread the consequences which this preference might have on the fortune and repose of Giovanni. The custom of the world had learned them that the self-love of the great, when once offended, is presently converted into hatred and revenge; and the same thought agitated and tormented their daughter still more.

“I know,” said she to the good Agatha, “the character of Giovanni; he loves me, and he will not be able to sacrifice the
wishes

wishes of his heart to either the considerations of policy or fortune. The more he thinks me to be pitied, the more he will be strengthened in the resolution which he has formed of rendering me happy. But ought I to be less generous than himself? Ought I not to sacrifice myself for him? His union with Moceniga will procure him places and honours; mine, on the contrary, will raise up powerful enemies to persecute him. What he has already done—what he still wishes to do for me, imposes on me the cruel necessity of sacrificing for him the happiness of my life: let him marry my rival, and be happy—let me alone be unhappy. In time, he may be able to forget me; ambition will, perhaps, take possession of his heart, and drive out love. I will go and bury in the recess of a cloister, that with which he has inspired me. Constantly prostrate at the foot of an altar, I will offer up for my lover the perpetual sacrifice of my happiness; and

heaven, touched with my tears, to soften my pangs, will render him happy."

Agatha, to turn her young mistress from this fatal resolution, employed all the arguments she could devise, or which her zealous attachment could suggest to her.

"The fortune of my master," said she, "is on too secure a foundation to be ever shaken. What has he to fear from the anger of the Piombinos? Though by their credit they might injure him in his profession, the wretched alone would suffer by their malice, for all which my master gains by it, is expended in their relief. Besides, if your lover's birth is inferior to that of those whose anger you dread his incurring, yet his virtues render him their equal. If men are ever so corrupted, virtue inspires them with that respect which is tantamount to fear: hence arises the safety of virtuous men, since the vicious tremble whilst they attack them. Cease then your apprehensions on my master's account.

account. You love him—he loves you : you ought to desire that he may be happy, and he cannot be so without you. Though love should not lay its commands on you, yet nature would impose it on you as a duty. Your marriage will secure the repose and tranquillity of your family.”

Paulina listened to this discourse with the greatest satisfaction ; it was too flattering to her passion not to please her heart : but though it strengthened her in her resolution of not yielding the advantages which love and friendship gave her over her rival, yet she could not get rid of some emotions of jealousy, which, in the moments of alarm, rendered her gloomy and thoughtful ; at other times, made her pay unusual attention to her dress, and rendered the sallies of her wit more lively and pointed. Jealousy, the child of hope and fear, gives to her, whose breast it occupies, that distrust of herself which makes her overlook her own advantages. She imagined that she had every thing to fear for the heart of

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her

her lover, when she was absolute mistress of it.

As jealousy is only self-love alarmed, it is always accompanied by a fear of being suspected of so mean a passion. Hence arise also those perpetual cares to conceal it, and those praises which are bestowed on that rival whose attractions are dreaded. Whenever Paulina was in company with Moceniga, she showed her those attentions which might have been mistaken for friendship of the heart, and not for so many tricks of policy. When they were apart, she praised her virtues, in hopes of hearing faults found in her ; she spoke of her goodness of heart, to give room for a critique on her character ; she extolled her wit, to give rise to a different opinion ; she always took her part against those who attacked her, and yet was secretly obliged to them for so doing. Sometimes, when she was alone with her lover, her tenderness yielded to her fear ; she spoke to him of her rival, and studied, at the same time, the

the most minute of his looks, to trace the sentiments of his heart; a gesture, a single motion, were narrowly observed; but nothing escaped him to give just cause of alarm. Reason and jealousy are, however, incompatible. If Giovanni spoke well of Moceniga, Paulina thought him unfaithful; if he spoke unfavourably of her in any respect, she accused him of dissimulation; if he changed the subject to speak to her of his passion, she believed him still more criminal; she construed it into a disguise which he made use of to conceal his inconstancy. Biassed by such unjust ideas, she had neither the art of hiding the impression which they made on her mind, nor the strength to moderate it. Giovanni had oftentimes to undergo the caprices of her humour, reproaches, sharp replies, and even threats of her shutting herself up in a convent. His presents and his assiduities were often refused and rejected; and a party of pleasure, projected with the greatest expectations of happiness, was

broken at the very moment of putting it into execution, by a feigned indisposition:

The entrance of Moceniga always produced a change in Paulina, who, from the height of hilarity, passed to the utmost gloom, and became thoughtful, silent, and melancholy : oftentimes she would seek some pretext to retire into her own apartment ; at other times, she would refuse to admit her lover to make one of her party at play ; and when she saw him compelled by this refusal to make one with her rival, she would despair inwardly, break up her party, renew it again ; and becoming petulant and distracted, would quarrel with every one. Those inequalities of temper and caprices astonished and grieved Giovanni, but he could not be offended at them ; there were even moments when those foibles of his mistress flattered his heart.—“ She loves me,” he would say ; “ and ought I to find fault with the effects of her tenderness ? A sensible heart is easily touched and disturbed. In those moments

moments of clouded passion, reason is obscured, and chimeras mistaken for realities. Have not I myself experienced seasons of fear and alarm? The least eulogy which is bestowed on her person or understanding, gives me pain; and I almost attribute to her as a crime, that any besides myself can think that she possesses merit. There are times when I would wish her without beauty, without wit; the least attention which is paid to her, by those who seek only to please me by it, disconcerts me; and it costs me great efforts to hinder the effects of those involuntary emotions from breaking out. How often have I felt, for my own brother, something like hatred? All the love which I have for him, instantly vanishes when I see him take pains to render himself agreeable to Paulina. If he prevent her wishes, I attribute the motives of his conduct to a desire of gaining her affections; and if she express the least gratitude for the little attentions which he pays to her, it is, in my clouded eyes, a reason
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to believe that she prefers him. The smallest service which she requires of him, confirms me in this idea ; and when chance seats him by the side of her, there is no artifice to which I do not resort to make him change places. I feel it like a triumph to dispossess him of the pleasure which I imagine he possesses."

What Giovanni took for a delusion of his own passion, was, however, founded on reality. His brother, Justiniano, loved Paulina, and her charms had inspired him with desires which had given birth to the odious design of making a wreck of her virtue.

Nature had implanted in the breast of Justiniano, the seeds of all those virtues which his brother possessed, but they had been choked with baneful weeds. Idolized by his parents in his infancy, entrusted in his youth to negligent mercenaries, he had received a brilliant polish, but no principles. Left to his own guidance, and master of a great fortune, at an age when the passions know very few bounds ; having
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for a guide neither the example of virtuous friendship, nor the counsels of experience (for he had been taught to despise the sober turn of his brother), they had carried him into vicious excesses. Bad company had poisoned his taste, and the false pleasures to which they had allured him, fixed him in his errors; and the indulgence of the fashionable world prevented his thinking them criminal. He was possessed of a good figure and a tolerable understanding; but the other sex thought him agreeable, pardoned his follies, and, in the end, rendered him a coxcomb.

He no sooner beheld Paulina, than her beauty struck him, her wit charmed him, and her accomplishments surprised him. Desire inflamed his heart, which was the more violent for the obstacles which lay in the way of the accomplishment of it. The virtuous parents who watched her conduct; the passionate Giovanni, who scarcely ever quitted her; the natural reserve of her manners, and circumspection of her conversation,

versation, which announced principles of honour and virtue—all opposed, but did not discourage him. His former conquests gave him confidence; and his self-love, inflamed by those barriers, made him conceive hopes of overcoming them.

As he did not know the intentions of his brother, who had not disclosed to him his design of uniting his fate with her's, he believed that he entertained only similar pretensions to his own, and he saw no crime in preventing him. He was not, however, wanting in friendship for his brother; he even entertained for him all that kind of respect which a superior virtue commands; but he thought the conquest of a woman of too little consequence to be renounced out of respect or friendship.

In spite of this libertine system, the presence of Paulina produced on him such an impression of awe, that, losing all his boldness, he became timid, embarrassed, mild, and even bashful. His discourse was modest; and, according to the custom
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of the country, could scarcely be deemed gallant. Wholly intent on pleasing her; he neglected every other person, and had no attention but for her, which often rendered him in her eyes importunate.

CHAP. III.

LIBERTINES are seldom without connections, but they have no confidence in those to whom they associate themselves; they cordially despise each other; it is only the countenance which they receive from a similar corruption of their hearts which forms their intimacy; and they hate when they are no longer necessary to each other. Justiniano, without experience, and hurried away by the torrent of his passions, had

had connected himself with one of those characters who make nature blush for having formed them, and humanity groan at tolerating them—he was called Gramani; and their acquaintance had originated at the house of one of those actresses who rely much more on the reputation of their talents, than on their other attractions, to draw the men into their snares. When fast noosed, these rapacious syrens ruin them with all the appearance of disinterestedness, and afterwards dismiss them, to spare themselves, as they term it, the unhappiness of beholding them miserable.

Gramani, a Transylvanian, born without fortune, had lived as if he was master of a very splendid one, during the little more than two years since he came to Genoa. As he had, at first, neither profession, trade, nor employment, he derived his resources in a manner which was a secret to every one; but he had so completely masked his proceedings, that no one could reproach him with having obtained them by unfair means.

means. He did not possess a single accomplishment; but a vast condescension to the will of others, and an unbounded complaisance for their tastes and pliability of disposition, made them overlook his coarse railleries, low manners, and plebeian familiarities. His figure was so well suited to his manners, that at sight of him, every idea of consequence vanished: he had, however, in less than a year, contrived to get into a public employment. The place which he held (one of the inferior magistracies of the city) was much above his rank and expectations in life; he had obtained it by his insinuating and grovelling disposition, and some no very honourable services rendered to those on whom he placed his dependence. His office gave him a degree of consequence which he did not merit; and through it, he had married a widow possessed of a large property. Although Gramani loved pleasure, yet he adored money; his sole object in making choice of his companions, was
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to meet with those young rakes of fortune, to whom he condescended to be serviceable in any respect, upon condition of sharing in their pleasures, and at their sole expence. Justiniano was one of those whom he had pitched upon for this purpose, and he had submitted to every degradation to make himself useful to him.

Justiniano was so delighted with Gramani, that he had spoken of him to Giovanni as a man who was highly estimable, and had given him a desire to be acquainted with such a character. Men, truly virtuous, have very little distrust ; and it is with great difficulty that they are brought to suspect others of those vices of which their own hearts are free. Giovanni was easily deceived with respect to Gramani ; he was the dupe of his pretended discretion, his affected modesty, and his insinuating manners. He soon felt an esteem for him, which went even to confidence. He was delighted that his brother had formed such a connection, as he hoped that a general
change

change in his manners would be derived from it. He extolled Gramani's candour, probity, and honesty, without ceasing, and commended his virtues in all companies.

The power which the beauty of Paulina had effected over the hearts of the two brothers, did not escape the penetrating Gramani. His policy and knavery made him pay infinite, although concealed, attention to all the movements of those with whom he connected himself, in order to become thoroughly acquainted with the inmost secrets of their hearts, and turn them afterwards to his own advantage.

"You are in love," said he one day to Justiniano; "Paulina has subdued you, and you are become the timid lover of this beauty. I would lay a wager that you have not yet dared to disclose your passion to her; her virtue renders you pusillanimous—you think her impregnable. What is become of all your confidence? I think the enterprize difficult, but not impossible. She is young and inexperienced; and if
you

you can manage so as to entangle her heart without alarming her virtue, she will prove an easy conquest. I have also formed a project of conquest, which will be much more difficult in the execution. You aim at the daughter—I intend to lay siege to the mother. I foresee all the obstacles which I shall have to overcome, but they do not deter me. If the wife of Rosomański has more experience than your mistress, I am more subtle and more skilful than you are. Imitate me—mark well my conduct—direct your approaches by mine, and rest assured of your triumph. But let me begin by pointing out to you the difficulties of your undertaking. Your brother will be the chief obstacle, and a very formidable one: he is amiable, and he knows it; you have attractions, and you know it. His modesty prepossesses in his favour; your confidence keeps you at a distance. He has virtues, and you have only some trifling qualities. He knows how to make himself beloved by the women, and you
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are only master of the art of amusing them. He has their esteem and confidence, and you are only an object of their caprice. Do yourself justice, and you will find that all your merit consists in your wealth; and without that, which is the sole cause of your being admitted to an intimacy with a certain class of women, they would not even look at you. It is only through pride and vanity that they make choice of you to conduct them to public places, or to pique a dull lover that they give you the privilege of assisting them at their toilettes. Your brother, though he should be poor, would still be preferred : to supplant him, you must metamorphose yourself, and disguise the coxcomb, flushed with conquest, under the humble, suppliant lover. Follow my example. To succeed with the mother, you will see me, in her presence, bashful and respectful. I shall discourse before her only of wisdom, goodness, and beneficence ; I shall lay out the grand principles of the severest morality ;
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I shall begin with being the most honest and the best of men ; and I shall finish with being the phœnix of lovers—above all, affect to be the sincere friend of Rosomaski, to succeed the better with his daughter. Take the same rule of conduct; quit these supercilious airs, and those loose manners, which may please, but cannot touch the heart. Become a wise man—a Cato—a Saint, if it be necessary. When the women esteem, and do not fear us, they give readily into our snares. One who makes you his confident, is ready to yield to you.”

It was not a wish to see Justiniano happy in the possession of the object of his passion, which induced Gramani to give him this advice ; -he was not formed of that sort of materials which delights in the happiness of others ; but he hated Giovanni, and the root of his hatred was the homage which he himself was compelled to pay to his virtues. Bad men are so very much humbled by their own corruption, and they
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are so very conscious of it, that they never lose an opportunity of injuring those who make them so sensibly feel their own inferiority. To confirm Justiniano in his mad passion, was the surest means to make him hate his brother, and seek to wound him in the tenderest part, which was a sufficient reason to make Gramani urge him on ; but his malevolent heart had still another more powerful inducement, in thus seeking to heap misfortunes upon the ever persecuted Rosomaskis. Although they never suspected it, yet their destruction was his aim, and he resolved to leave no means untried to effect it. What motive actuated him to this malignancy, will be seen in its proper place. He foresaw, that by rendering Rhodiska unfaithful to her husband, he should wound Giovanni still deeper, as he would share alike the pleasures and the pains of his friend.

The success of these black projects appeared to him the more certain, as no one suspected him of being capable of forming

them. Giovanni thought him an enlightened magistrate, a sensible man, and a fast friend ; and Gramani knew how to confirm him in his error. Not a day passed that he did not visit him, strive to please him, study his disposition, applaud and flatter him ; yet always with so much address, that it did not appear like flattery. He procured Giovanni's friendship, and with it his confidence, for with friends Giovanni had no reserve. He acquainted Gramani with his intention of marrying Paulina, and consulted him as to the steps which he ought to take with the Piombinos, so as to avoid giving offence to them, which he apprehended he should do, by refusing to marry their niece. This intelligence was food for the malignancy of Gramani ; but to convert it to his purposes, the confidence of the Piombinos was to be also gained ; his own vanity, no less than his hatred of Giovanni, demanded it. Men of Gramani's character imagine that a connection with the great conceals the baseness

baseness of their own origin, and his was a punishment to him.—“Those,” said he, “who are ignorant of it, seeing me received at the Piombinos, if they do not think me their equal, will, at least, imagine that the blood which flows in my veins is as pure as theirs. There are families in the civil department, of as high antiquity as those of the military nobility.”

The Count and Countess del Piombino were excessively vain and haughty—flattery was their incense; and whoever was a proficient in that despicable art, wanted very little other introduction to their familiarity. Gramani could be as mean and grovelling, when it suited his views and interest, as he was supercilious, boastful, and impertinent to those who might have occasion of his services, or stand in awe of his office. He frequently saw the Piombinos at the house of Giovanni, and he soon caused himself to be noticed by them on account of his attentions, and his taking

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every

every opportunity of bringing up in conversation their rank and credit ; but, still more, by the trouble which he took to procure them money. By these means their palace was always open to him ; and when Giovanni was not present, he flattered them without delicacy—applauded their very caprices and vices—entered into all their schemes—adopted all their measures—was the confidant of the Countess, and the companion of the Count in all his revels.

Gramani no sooner found himself on sure ground at the Piombinos, than he strove to strengthen them in their scheme of marrying their niece to Giovanni. He himself was fully bent on effecting it, because, from what he soon learned of Moceniga's character, he was convinced that whoever should be her husband must be wretched, and he ardently wished that man to be Giovanni : at least, if he could not succeed in this scheme of wreaking his malice upon him, he knew that it would be a certain method of rendering all the relations

relations and friends of the Piombinos, his decided and inveterate enemies.

In the character of a friend of Giovanni, he was incessantly praising him—excusing his birth on the score of his virtues—boasting of his wealth, character, credit, and good qualities, and quoting all the other families who had yielded to receive men of inferior rank into their alliance, on account of their great wealth, public influence, or superior merit. To add to all this, he would hint that it was an infallible way to re-establish their house in full splendour, to pay their debts, and to contribute to keep up their pomp. All those reasons, offered with the greatest address, still farther inflamed the desire of the Piombinos to have their niece united with Giovanni.

In the meantime, Justiniano, pushed on by Gramani, was striving to ingratiate himself with Paulina. He had broken with all his former acquaintance, and visited his brother every day; his assiduities were

constant, but he gained nothing by them. Instead of his frequent visits being agreeable, his brother and Paulina could not avoid, at times, discovering that they thought them ill-timed, especially as, by this perpetual interruption, they were often deprived of those pleasing moments, in which two fond hearts wish to confide to each other all their feelings.

Justiniano grew impatient at the little progress which he made, and attributed the cause of it to his too great timidity. He ventured to declare his sentiments to Paulina ; but his declaration was received with so much indifference, that it was easy to be seen that he was never to expect from love the accomplishment of his wishes.

Gramani, following up his schemes, confirmed him in this idea, by telling him that he could never triumph over his brother, as he had just been informed, by himself, that he was resolved to break at once with Moceniga, and not to delay his marriage with Paulina any longer. He
added,

added, that the preparations for the ceremony were already commenced, and that it was to be performed at his country seat. By this information he sought to irritate Justiniano, even to a forgetfulness of every principle of honour, and even of nature.

Having thus instilled the baneful poison of jealousy into the heart of Justiniano, he sought the Piombinos, and acquainted them with the secret preparations which were making for the marriage of *Giovanno* with *Paulina*. He feigned to be so indignant at this insult, as he termed it, of *Giovanno* to the noble family of the *Piombinos*, that they blindly attributed his warmth to his attachment to them.

“*Giovanno*,” said he, “forgets that he owes to you rank and birth: he ought to think your alliance the highest honour; and though he has not positively accepted your offer, yet it is sufficient that he knows your intentions to make a prompt submission to them. When persons of your condition humble themselves to ple-

beians, they ought to sacrifice every thing to obedience. He is to be pitied for his blindness to his own interest; but I know not what methods he proposes to take to deprecate your just displeasure."

The great are easily deceived with respect to the extent of their privileges; surrounded by base flatterers, and interested dependents, they are accustomed, from their infancy, to imagine that they are of a different nature from other men. They construe that respect which is shewn to their rank, into a right of exacting a blind obedience, and total submission to their will. When the understanding is thus confined by pride within narrow bounds, they are very susceptible of hatred towards those who dare to refuse to be their slaves. Gramani was too well acquainted with the Count and Countess del Piombino, to doubt that they would make a pleasure of revenging themselves upon a man to whom they owed so much gratitude for the essential services which he had rendered them.

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To make it more sure, he prevailed upon them to dissemble; and he easily engaged Justiniano, who was enraged at his disappointment, to come into their views.

As the Piombinos were ignorant of Justiniano's designs upon Paulina, they imagined that he sacrificed his fraternal feelings to his attachment to them; and this sacrifice was so flattering to their vanity, that they promised him their protection, and their niece's hand, with a considerable and important employment, which he was to gain through their interest, although they would have found it a very difficult matter to have fulfilled the latter part of their promises. This arrangement was followed by a plan for their conduct, which had been drawn up by Gramani, and was accepted with the utmost joy. Justiniano was to continue his stratagems to overcome Paulina with increasing perseverance; and if they all failed, he was to carry her off, with the assistance of the Count, to one of his estates, and prevent his brother's ever

marrying her, by the ruin of her honour. Gramani, on his part, profiting by the confidence which Rosomaski and Rhodiska reposed in him as the friend of Giovanno, was to endeavour to triumph over the fidelity of Rhodiska, and to break the friendship which subsisted between Giovanno and her husband. Gramani was declared the prime mover of this horrid conspiracy, and all swore to follow his advice, and to keep each other's secret.

The first step which Gramani took was to recommend to the unsuspecting Rosomaski, a person who was wholly devoted to himself, to fill the place of his valet-de-chambre: he was a Frenchman, named Sardine, as knavish as his protector, to whom he had been as serviceable, on certain occasions, as his protector had been to others: like him, he was cunning, insinuating, and pliant; he knew well how to affect a great zeal, attachment, vigilance, and activity; and, in a short time, he gained from Rosomaski, all that degree of confidence

confidence which is usually given to people of that condition of life, in its fullest extent : he knew almost the whole of his master's concerns, and his knowledge was instantly communicated to Gramani.

No opportunity had, as yet, offered to Justiniano, either to ensnare or carry off Paulina ; and, at length, the whole of the confederates were alarmed by the intelligence which they received from Sardine, that the preparations for Giovanni's marriage with Paulina were nearly ready, and that it would be performed without delay. A council was immediately assembled at the palace of Piombino, and midnight was arrived before they had come to any conclusion how to protract or break it off entirely. They were suddenly alarmed by a violent knocking at the outer gate. It was presently announced to the Count that a messenger was arrived, to summon his immediate attendance at the senate-house, on business of the utmost importance. The Count desired Justiniano and Gramani to

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remain.

remain with the Countess and Moceniga till his return, and continue their consultations.

Six hours elapsed before the Count returned, and he entered the room in such an excess of joy and exultation as surprised the rest.

“I have done it !” cried he ; “I give you all joy—give me joy in return. Trouble yourselves no more with devising how to protract this marriage—I have deferred it for two months at the least. Giovanno is already on the road to Paris.”

“Paris !” reiterated his associates.

“Yes, Paris,” rejoined the Count, “and you shall hear in what manner I effected it, for he is indebted to me only for this journey. When I came to the senate-house, I found that dispatches of the utmost consequence had just arrived from France ; and, upon deliberation, it was thought necessary by all, that a person of the utmost discretion, and in whom the most unbounded confidence could be placed,
must

must be instantly dispatched to open a negociation on the business. My mind was infinitely more intent upon the affair which we had been deliberating upon here, than that which was debating in the senate-house ; but I no sooner heard this resolution, which promised to answer our purposes as well as those of the senate, than I instantly started up.

‘ Who,’ cried I, ‘ can be so fit for this purpose as Paulo Giovanno ? Not a man in Genoa but knows his discretion, and has witnessed his zeal for the service of the place of his nativity. His virtues demand that you should show the sense you have of them, by reposing your confidence in him. Besides, if you have any doubt, the immense wealth he will leave in your power will be a sure pledge of his fidelity.’

“ As the little spark, falling upon tinder, inflames and spreads all over it, so did my proposition pervade every heart in the senate—it was applauded and unanimously adopted. Giovanno was immediately summoned,

moned, and the intentions of the senate made known to him. I could see, that the news furrowed up his heart, as the elective fluid sometimes ploughs up the earth. He would have excused himself on account of his want of rank, his youth, and his ignorance of diplomatic science, but in vain. After the senate has once disclosed their purposes to a man, they oblige him to fulfil them. Under pretence of protecting him from the banditti who infest the mountains, a troop of horse were ordered to attend him to a certain distance, and only one hour was allowed Giovanni to make ready for his departure. I made our intimacy a pretext for following him home, and continuing with him till his departure, to prevent the marriage ceremony from being celebrated in that interval. Count Rosomaski was the only person whom Giovanni would suffer to be roused; and after having acquainted him with the reason of his journey, and packed up a few necessaries, I had the happiness of witnessing

nessing an adieu, which seemed to rive the heart of both of them."

It is almost impossible to describe the exultations which this communication gave rise to, unless in those words of Milton, by which he relates the applause of the infernals when Mammon had ended his speech in the Pandæmonian council:—

" He scarce had finish'd, when such murmurs fill'd
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence hull
Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest : such applause was heard
As *Mammon* ended."

Par. Lost. l. ii. lines 284, &c.

After having congratulated each other on this unexpected respite, and animated to fresh exertions, the council broke up for that night.

CHAP. IV.

ROSOMASKI had taken care to pay the landlord, who had so unworthily and inhumanly treated him in his distress, what was due to him, and to withdraw Rhodiska's ring. He had been obliged to intreat him civilly to direct his messenger, when he should return from Cracow, where to find him in his new abode. Giovanni had not been gone many days before the long-expected messenger arrived, and put into Rosomaski's hands a parcel, the superscription of which he immediately recognized to be the hand-writing of Theresia. As it was addressed to Rhodiska, he carried it to her

her unopened. They were delighted to find, from Theresia's letter, that she was well, and as much their friend as ever. It was no small accession to their joy, to find that their little fortune was safe, and that they were once more independent. But Rosomaski was filled with the most gloomy suspicions, when he heard that Ludowico was not yet returned to Cracow, and that Mrs. Vendost had been certainly married to a Mr. Rugonner. This circumstance appeared so strong a confirmation of the truth of the charge alledged against him by Dorothea, that he was confirmed in his idea that friendship was only a chimera; or that, if it existed, it was only another name for self-interest. He would have sunk again into his old train of melancholy reflections, if it had not been for the joyful event by which the long-lost Ladislaus had been so providentially and unexpectedly restored to them. So ardent were the desires of Rosomaski and Rhodiska to receive him to their arms,

arms, that the threats of their persecutor would not have been sufficient to deter them from returning instantly to Cracow, if it had not been for the strong ties by which they were bound to await the return of Giovanni from Paris. As Theresia had never received any of the former letters which they had sent her by the customary conveyance of the post-office, they suspected, as was really the case, that their malignant enemy had intercepted them, to prevent their friends from knowing where they were, and relieving their distressed situation. Their persecutor had constantly sent a messenger to the post-office at Cracow to ask for Theresia's letters; those which had the Genoese post-mark on them he detained, but took care to forward all the rest unopened. This scheme prevented Theresia from imagining that any of her letters had been intercepted, and induced her to imagine either that the unfortunate Rosomaskis had perished, or were so strictly
watched,

watched, that they could find no opportunity of making their situation known to her.

Previously to Giovanni's setting out for Paris, he had called Rosomaski aside, and intreated him to execute a small commission for him in his absence.

"There are," said he, "two females in this city, a mother and a daughter, whom a train of unmerited misfortunes have reduced to depend on me for the principal part of their subsistence. As my departure from Genoa is so unexpected, and at so late an hour, I have not been able to provide against their wants during my absence. You may easily guess why I do not chuse to confide such an affair to so inconsiderate and wild a young man as, I am sorry to say, my brother Justiniano is. I trust to your well-known prudence and honour to supply them with whatever may be necessary in my absence."

After he had pointed out to Rosomaski the exact situation of the house where these persons

persons resided, he added—"You know my extreme aversion to the having any little acts of humanity, which I may have it in my power to do to my fellow-creatures in distress, rendered public; therefore, I intreat that you will keep your visits to these ladies a profound secret from all the world."

Rosomaski promised the most strict compliance with his request and injunction; and, by so doing, he gave his enemies a fresh opportunity of carving out a fresh series of misfortunes, which again plunged himself and his unfortunate family into the utmost distress, and had nearly deprived Rhodiska of her existence.

Rosomaski had not delayed to visit the objects of his friend's benevolence; and he had kept the matter a secret even from Rhodiska, too fatally thinking himself bound in honour to adhere to the letter of his friend's injunction. Sardine, who, by Gramani's orders, watched all his motions, traced him to the house, learned that it was occupied

occupied by two females, and instantly flew to communicate this intelligence to his patron, who received it with a most malignant satisfaction. It brought with it a train of mischievous ideas, which afforded food to his gangrened mind. He thought that he had found a sure expedient of interrupting the harmony of Rosomaski and his wife, as the visits of the former were carried on mysteriously, and without the knowledge of the latter, and of pushing on his own designs against the virtue of Rhodiska. His plan was to metamorphose the youngest of these women into one of those unfortunate persons who have become the victims of the other sex, and to transform the mother into one of those unprincipled women who, swayed by gold, sell the honour of their children, and raise themselves a subsistence, without blushing at the infamous method by which it is obtained. The only difficulty would be to pass off this deception on Rhodiska, and to make her suspect her husband's fidelity ; but

Gramani's

Gramani's invention was too fertile in expedients of that kind, not to furnish him with the means of obtaining his ends. He caused two letters to be written, by two females who were subservient to all his views. One of these letters, which was to pass for that of the daughter to Rosomaski, was filled with reproaches for having made her poverty a step to her ruin, and accusing him of being, of late, rather remiss in his attentions; the other from the mother, contained demands of money, and menaces of divulging the secret to his wife, in case they were not immediately complied with. These letters were to prove the intrigue, the infidelity of Rosomaski, and the rapacity of the mother. They were addressed to Count Rosomaski, and delivered into the hands of Sardine, who, by means of a false key, which he procured to be made from a wax model of that of Rosomaski's writing-desk, contrived to deposit them with his other papers, at a time when Rosomaski was absent, and when he had heard

him desire Rhodiska to answer a letter of Giovanni, which he had not then time to do. Rosomaski kept nothing concealed from his wife but his visits to the two ladies, which Giovanni had (without meaning to include the Countess) desired him to mention to no one; he trusted her with all his affairs, and she perused all his papers. In seeking for Giovanni's letter, which she was to answer, she was struck with beholding the superscription of two letters in unknown hands. She perused them without hesitation, and was so surprised at what she saw, that imagining her eyes had deceived her, she read them over again and again. Although no doubts remained of her husband's infidelity, yet, in spite of the agitation into which this discovery threw her, she took a firm resolution of concealing her chagrin within her own bosom, particularly from him who was the cause of it.

“If it is an error, which does not proceed from my having entirely lost his affection,”

affection," said she, "it will soon pass over. If it be a passion in which his heart is engaged, all the grief which I should discover, will not diminish its strength ; on the contrary, my reproaches would delay, if not destroy, all hopes of the return of his affection, and his unhappiness would increase mine. If he does not love me, he does not hate me ; and the surest way for a wife in my unfortunate condition, to avoid hatred, is to await till his reason awake his slumbering virtue, and not to confirm him in open guilt by any symptoms of ill-timed jealousy."

If she had calmly reflected that as Rosmaski knew that she inspected all his papers, and even wished she should do so, she would have conceived the improbability of his having deposited those which he would have kept secret from her beyond all the world, amongst the other papers to which she had daily access ; but Gramani was intelligent in the human heart ; he was well aware that every passion, and that of jealousy

jealousy, above all others, was blind. At all events, if the imposition should not pass upon Rhodiska's penetration, he had wrapped himself up so securely, that it was nearly impossible that he should be discovered as the author of this shocking attempt.

When the distressed Rhodiska had taken so prudent and generous a resolution, she put the letters, the destroyers of her tranquillity, into the place from whence she had taken them, and had no sooner left the room than the perfidious Sardine instantly took them away before the return of Rosomaski, so that he could have no suspicion of the base deception which had been passed upon Rhodiska, and consequently no opportunity of clearing up her unjust suspicions of his fidelity.

In spite of the resolution with which Rhodiska had determined to bear this dreadful shock, she could not long withstand the cutting pangs which she endured from the loss of a husband's affections. Till this fatal discovery, she had ever thought them

be unalienable. The more she struggled to conceal her grief, the more the wound rankled. Melancholy seized her, and nothing could divert her from the gloomy reflections to which she soon entirely gave way. Under pretence of indisposition, she shut herself up in her chamber; and the smiles which formerly graced her features, were totally banished.

Rosomaski, alarmed at this sudden change, of which he could not possibly divine the cause, and which he therefore attributed solely to ill health, redoubled his attentions and caresses; but far from alleviating Rhodiska's grief, they only rendered it more violent: she regarded them as so many deceptions, intended to disguise his real want of affection for her. Gramani did not fail to watch the progress of his baseness; he knew that a woman, once offended, is prone to revenge, and his criminal desires were raised by expectations of success. He was assiduous in his attentions to Rhodiska, and he was the only
person

person from whose company she seemed to derive any comfort. The idea which she entertained of the goodness of his heart, made her believe him her friend. Many times was the secret, which had poisoned her felicity, on the point of dropping from her lips, in confidence of his friendship; but as often did she retain it, either through unwillingness to betray the weakness of her husband, or through her feeling hurt at making a confession of her being neglected. But, one day when Gramani surprised her with her eyes reddened by the tears which she had been shedding, he pressed her so earnestly, and with so much apparent concern for her interest, to entrust him with the cause of her grief, that he prevailed upon her to arm him with those weapons with which he intended to wound her still deeper.

Gramani's joy was so excessive, that his most consummate hypocrisy was needful to disguise it. He alternately feigned a great surprise—a doubt—a wish to undeceive
E 2 her;

her; but all the reasons which she gave for his doubts were so weak, as only to prove a greater certainty of the fact. He, at one time, expressed the firmest reliance on Rosomaski's honour; but immediately afterwards, he acknowledged that the letters were a strong proof of the contrary: at another, he pronounced it only a slight affair of gallantry, in which Rosomaski's passions, and not his affections, were engaged, and predicted his speedy return to virtue; but, in the same breath, he painted, in the strongest colours, the strong hold which women, like Rhodiska's rival, generally obtained over the hearts of those men who have been fatally ensnared by them. In short, after having corroborated Rhodiska's injurious suspicions in the most artful manner, and completed the distraction of her senses by his double arguments, he obtained all that he could expect at that time—her unbounded confidence. She declared her readiness to abide by his advice in this most delicate and trying conjuncture,
and

and left it to him to disprove or confirm her suspicions.

Gramani could not have received a more agreeable commission, and he promised to scrutinize Rosomaski's conduct with the utmost exactness, and to inform her of the result.

It was necessary, in the first place, that Gramani should ascertain whether the ladies whom Rosomaski privately visited, were of that vile description which he had caused them to represent in the forged letters, and he went that evening, in disguise, to the place where Sardine had informed him they lived. He made enquiries of all their neighbours respecting their appearance, mode of life, manners—and the result was, that they were very retired, frugal, peaceable persons, whose character and conduct no one had the least reason to impeach. Gramani was, therefore, disappointed in his first expectation of detecting the Count in a real intrigue, but he had laid his schemes so as to obviate every probable

E. 3.

obstacle.

obstacle. Without hesitation, therefore, when he came to give the melancholy Rhodiska an account of his discoveries, he described the mean apartments of these ladies as an elegant suite of rooms, fitted up in superb style ; their humble dress was transformed into a splendid wardrobe, and their frugal diet into a sumptuous table. The characters of the ladies he modelled so as to exactly suit the opinion which the blinded Rhodiska had formed of them from the forged letters : but to make her despair of recovering the heart of her husband, he took care to draw the most captivating portrait of her rival ; he painted her as the most graceful and seducing figure he had ever seen. By these falsehoods, the monster planted daggers in the heart of Rhodiska, and made her imagine that her husband was the most criminal of men. Besides his infidelity to herself, she now believed him guilty of lavishing away the unlimited bounty of the generous Giovanni in his unlawful pleasures.

As

As one indiscretion commonly begets another, Rhodiska, unable to support the oppressive weight of her imaginary sufferings, acquainted her cruel enemy with her most intimate secrets. She told him all the history of her past misfortunes, with which he was already but too well acquainted; but her most fatal slip was to let him know, amongst the rest, the misery from which the benevolence of Giovanni had drawn them. This last indiscretion augmented the joy and hopes of Gramani. Like all the rest of the world, he had till then imagined, from the appearance and behaviour of the Rosomaskis, that they had been long acquainted with Giovanni, and were people of independent fortunes; but he had no sooner extracted this last secret, than, confiding in his art to ruin this unfortunate family at his pleasure; with their benefactor, Giovanni, he resolved to become more bold and open in his advances to Rhodiska. His attention to her was

more marked, and his conversation less circumspect.

“ Your displeasure against your husband is just,” said he ; “ but your grief is useless : he despises you, and you should cease to esteem—to love him. Nay, if your heart cannot be satisfied without revenge, his conduct towards you authorizes every means you may think proper to make use of. He is the only person who does not know the value of your heart. Whoever sees, admires you ; your qualifications inspire, and render it impossible to withstand the tenderest regard.”

This language did not at first surprise Rhodiska ; she regarded it only as that of friendship too warmly interested in her misfortunes ; she thought Gramani too honest to entertain any other view ; but finding that he continually touched the same string, and that, in his conversation, he relaxed considerably from that rigid system of morality which he had always
been

been accustomed to praise before her, she began to entertain some suspicions of his having some particular designs. Fearing, therefore, lest by listening to these insinuations any longer, she should not only give encouragement to him to carry them to a greater length, but should seem to be pleased with them, she resolved to take the first opportunity of putting an end to them.

It soon arrived.—On the very next interview, Gramani, presuming on the imprudent confidence of the unsuspecting Rhodiska, renewed the subject with much less reserve than ever; but she cut him short at once, and said, with a look of offended pride and virtue—

“ I should undoubtedly think myself insulted by your discourse, if I thought you were in earnest. If you are not, you will drop the hateful subject altogether, if you value my esteem. Learn to know my heart better, than to believe it capable of harbouring a thought of revenge. If my

husband is weak, I shall not excuse him by becoming criminal myself. To imitate him, would cover me with shame and dishonour in my own eyes, without diminishing the grief I feel. At present, I am only slighted by my husband; but if I was to forget what is due to myself, I should then become the object of his dishonour, and consequently of his hatred. I shall endeavour, by my conduct, to preserve his esteem, so as not to lose all hopes of reviving his tenderness, and weaning him from his temporary delusions. Rosomaski may be weak, but he is not vicious, and I have no doubt of the success of a project which I have formed. She, who is the cause of all my trouble, has perhaps more weakness than corruption in her heart. I will see her, and sound her disposition. It is often the case, that such women are only brought to the dissolute life they lead, by a train of misfortunes; and, groaning under their situation, many of them would readily quit it, if they were sure of an honest subsistence.

subsistence. Giovanni is a generous friend, who will readily second my views; he will contribute the means of recalling this unfortunate person to virtue; and by his friendly and prudent counsels, he will bring back my husband to the path from which he has strayed. I am this instant going to write to him."

"Stop!" cried Gramani, terrified at this design, "what are you going to do?—Unfortunate woman! you are not aware of the full extent of your misfortunes. I have been unwilling to overwhelm you with them, but the imprudent step which you are about to take, obliges me to develop the whole of this fatal mystery.—Giovanni is more than half the cause of your distress; he knows every thing—it was he who caused your husband to make this shameful connection. Before he became acquainted with you, your rival was maintained by him; but his new passion for your daughter having destroyed his former one, he got rid of her by introducing

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ducing the Count to her : he furnishes your husband with money to maintain her. Judge, after that, if you have any thing to hope for from this pretended friend."

Deterred by this new and impudent assertion, a thousand confused ideas rushed in upon Rhodiska's mind ; she made resolves, and broke them so fast as she made them. She would throw herself at the feet of her husband, and if he refused her his heart, she would pierce her own in his sight : then, apparently more calm, she traversed the room with her arms folded, and her eyes fixed, keeping profound silence. All at once, she started up to order the carriage, to go and implore the police to confine her who tormented her ; but, in an instant, she sunk into her chair, and vented her distress in tears and sobs. This mournful sight would have melted any other than Gramani—but to that monster it was delicious. Rhodiska's virtue and attachment to her husband having taken away all his hopes, hatred inflamed his
3 breast,

breast, and he quitted her only to incite the Countess del Piombino to new vengeance upon the unhappy Rosomaskis.

CHAP. V.

THE Countess del Piombino, without principles, was the slave of all her passions. Through caprice she made choice of one gallant, and through caprice she dismissed him for another. Imagining that respect for her rank placed her above scandal, she did not even care to keep up appearances; she wished to shew herself above common prejudice; her manners were so irregular, that, in a less elevated station, she would have been the blush of society. Her husband,

band, who was no less corrupt, paid no attention to her manners, and even authorized them by his own example. Even Gramani, devoid of every grace, was not thought a conquest unworthy of her; and she had already made him such advances, as were best suited to destroy the respect due to her birth and rank.

Gramani, to shew himself worthy of her favours, flew to make known to her what he had just learned from Rhodiska, of Giovanni's generosity; and she immediately informed her husband and Justiniano, who happened to be with him, of this new discovery. The Count and Countess, being both incapable of any generous sentiment themselves, attributed the conduct of Giovanni to interest, and agreed with Gramani that the daughter's honour had paid the price of the benefits which the father and mother had received, and that it was only to conceal the consequences that Giovanni had resolved to marry her. Justiniano, who was not so destitute of virtue as to
disbelieve

disbelieve its existence in others, at first revolted at the idea of his brother's being capable of such conduct ; but, inflamed as his heart was with passion, his reason was easily overborne by the other associates ; and he was convinced, by their arguments, that his success with Paulina would prevent his brother from the shame of marrying a dishonoured girl—or, at least, would rescue him, in case he had not triumphed over her virtue, from the imprudence of uniting himself to a family of which no person knew any thing, except what they had pleased to say of themselves ; for Gramani had, with his usual art, concealed from them that he had had any previous knowledge of them, and that they were really what they had given themselves out to be, of the noble families of Rosomaski and Petrowitz.

Whilst new plots of destruction were thus laying against the devoted Rosomaski, they were already so oppressed, that it would have seemed almost impossible to have

have added to their misery. The situation of Rhodiska, pale, inanimate, and desponding, had rendered her so weak, that her dissolution seemed very near at hand. Rosomaski had physicians called in, some of whom talked of spasmodic affections, of the bile, the gall, the liver, and the lungs, and every one prescribed something, but none of them could.

“Administer to a mind diseased.”

The Countess only knew that they could afford her no relief, and she declared her determination to let Nature take her course. Her husband and daughter were in despair at this resolution, and used every effort to dissuade her from it, but in vain.

Gramani was aware that his designs would be frustrated, if Rhodiska should declare the cause of her illness to her husband. His caresses, and those of her daughter—the tears of grief which they shed, were all so many causes of alarm: his scale of the human

human heart was so exact, as to give him to fear lest the secret, which he so much dreaded, should be drawn from her by all those tender expressions of affection; and there was no art to which he did not resort, to persuade Rhodiska not to reveal it.

“No person,” said Rhodiska to him one day, “knows the nature of my illness; nothing can heal the wound in my heart but death, which must put an end to my grief: I will expect it with patience, and receive it without a complaint. A single ray of hope only supports me. You are acquainted with the abode of her who precipitates me into my grave: let us go to her. I will throw myself at her feet, and intreat her to give me back the heart of my husband; her’s, perhaps, is not insensible, and will be softened by the sad state in which she will behold me. Dissolute manners do not always destroy every germ of sensibility; some sparks of honour may still lurk within her, and my tears and intreaties may rekindle them. Women of
her

her description have been sometimes known to do sublime acts of generosity. Let us make the trial. To-morrow, my husband and daughter have been invited to dine at the Count del Piombino's, and I have insisted upon their going: you can find some excuse for your absence, and come to conduct me to the place in your carriage. It is in vain to seek to make me change my resolution—it is unalterably fixed.”

Gramani was not a man easily disconcerted; what would have been mountains to others, were only mole-hills to him. His fertile invention always furnished him with the means of getting out of difficulties, and it did not fail him upon this occasion. He had a pleasure-house, at no great distance without the walls of the city, in which he had placed a young girl named Lucinda. She was pretty, had a tolerable share of sense, and the portrait which he had drawn to the Countess of the pretended mistress of her husband, suited her well enough to
adapt

adapt her for taking the part. Besides, Lucinda had formerly belonged to the theatre, and was in the habit of affecting those feelings to which her heart was a stranger. Gramani, therefore, hastened to her, acquainted her with the new part he had designed for her, gave her a lesson, and rehearsed it until he thought her sufficiently perfect. Of old Signora Trompettina, who served him in the capacity of duenna and housekeeper, he created the mother; and as she was accustomed to appear in whatever shape her employers pleased, she was soon ready with her part. She possessed a genteel carriage and graceful manners, which she had derived from a good education, afforded her by parents whose ashes she had disgraced. The waiting-woman and valet next received their lessons for the ensuing day, and they all began to arrange their dresses, and put the house in order.

Gramani was exact to his appointment with Rhodiska, and he found her ready,
and

and impatient to accompany him. Lucinda, who dreaded to behold a jealous and haughty rival, of that character, birth, and behaviour, which never fail to strike awe into the most audacious profligacy, no sooner saw the embarrassed air and timid looks of Rhodiska, than her effrontery returned ; and forgetting what she was, she almost regarded herself as her superior, and affected so much ridiculous consequence, that Gramani was almost afraid she would '*o'ertop her part.*'

Rhodiska, with an air which did not shew the least anger or resentment, but, on the contrary, fully bespoke the mildness of her disposition and the goodness of her heart, said to her—" I do not come hither, Signora, to insult your situation, nor to find fault with your conduct ; I pity the unhappy circumstances which have drawn you into the one and the other. I am the wife of the gentleman who is your admirer, and this title might give me a right to hate you ; but my husband loves you, and I cannot wish

wish to make you miserable. Younger, and with more personal charms than myself, you have effaced me from his heart, and he has given it to you. If he has done an injustice to my affection, it is the effect of justice to your beauty; if you gave him up, perhaps he would return to me; he would restore me his heart, if he lost all hopes of possessing yours. If you have not discarded all sentiments of humanity—if you are not insensible to the pleasure of doing good, my tears will move you—the pangs which you see me endure will soften you, and you will resume the paths of virtue. Oblige my husband to follow your example; he will return to his duty free from remorse, and will be again happy.”

When Rhodiska stopped, Gramani thought it his time to begin; and he added to this pathetic and sensible speech, a thousand reasons for Lucinda's compliance, with so much apparent sincerity, that it would have been difficult to ascribe any other motive to them than the interest which he took

took in the welfare of the unfortunate Rhodiska. Lucinda played her part admirably; she appeared to be touched, and discovered some emotion, even to the applying her handkerchief to her eyes; she turned aside her head, as if in confusion, and seemed to struggle betwixt passion and repentance. At length, looking with assumed timidity at Rhodiska, she thanked her for the concern which she had discovered for her unfortunate situation, and for the indulgence which she testified for her failings, of which she confessed herself unworthy. She complained of the hardness of her fate, which, in spite of her inclination, compelled her to be ungrateful.—“Alas!” added she, sobbing violently, “it was Giovanni, who, taking advantage of the miserable situation of my mother, obtained from her that consent which has reduced me to shame and infamy. When this cruel, perfidious man abandoned me, if it had not been for the pity of your husband, I should have been the sad victim
of

of treachery, and the sport of libertines. I owe him every thing. How can I, after so many benefits, repay his generosity by the blackest ingratitude—pierce his heart with the keen weapon of despair? Ah!” added she, throwing herself at the Countess’s feet, “pity my situation; command me rather to die, than to be wanting in gratitude for the most generous of men!”

Signora Trompettina had, hitherto, only appeared a mute spectator of this fine scene, but she had not been deficient in pantomimic action. She had sighed at proper intervals—raised her eyes to the ceiling—cast them on the floor, and wiped them several times. It was now her turn to speak, and to bring her pretended daughter decently out of the affair. She reproached her for her obstinacy in wishing to continue in a criminal correspondence—reminded her of her education, the principles of virtue, which had been instilled into her by her father and herself—pointed to her the long and painful struggles which
she

she had endured before she could be brought to consent to her dishonour; she invoked the *manes* of her ancestors, and deprecated their anger, at the weakness with which she had permitted the purity of their blood to be polluted. The wrath of heaven was not forgotten, and she made a solemn promise to take every means of bringing back her daughter to the paths of virtue, from which she had strayed, and to sacrifice every thing to the repose of her conscience, and the honour of her child. This was the end of so extraordinary a farce; and Rhodiska departed, satisfied with the apparent contrition of the pretended daughter, and honest assurances of the mother.

Hope, how trifling soever it be, is a relief to an afflicted mind, and suspends its grief. Rhodiska, deceived by the harangue of Signora Trompettina, found in it a fruitful source of consolation.

“There are yet,” said she to Gramani, as they were returning home, “some principles

principles of religion and morality in the hearts of those two women—every sentiment of honour is not totally banished from them : heaven, compassionating my sufferings, will give them strength to maintain the virtuous resolutions which they have just formed. If my husband restore me his tenderness, every thing would be instantly forgotten. His heart has never been faithless to me—he has been deceived by his imagination : if he has bestowed his caresses upon his mistress, he has never bereaved me of his heart. Even in her arms, remorse wounds him ; the care which he takes to conceal it, proves how much he is afraid of giving me uneasiness. His grief when my illness increases, and his joy when it diminishes, ought to assure me of it. If I was to confess to him the step which I have just taken——”

“ Have a care, Madam,” said Gramani, interrupting her ; “ reflect before you adopt so hazardous a measure. Your husband, I think with you, will return to his duty ;

but you must manage with the utmost circumspection—the least imprudence will retard, if not totally destroy all your hopes. A man who is put to the blush, is oftentimes confirmed in his errors; he is, at least, freed from the dread of a discovery. Your husband, knowing you to be in his secret, will be ashamed of your sight—he will avoid you to get rid of your reproaches. Take my advice—continue to feign a total ignorance of his conduct—time and your perfections will reclaim him.”—By this time they had reached Rhodiska’s home.

When Rosomaski and his daughter returned from their visit to the Fiombinos, they were agreeably surprised at the wonderful change which they observed in Rhodiska: her looks were reanimated, and she even received them with smiles; she had no longer that languor which appears like indifference to all surrounding objects; her lips and her cheeks wore once more a slight tint of red. Her husband and daughter experienced the most exquisite joy at this unexpected

unexpected change, and gave her the most unequivocal testimonies of it, by the fervency of their embraces, and the tears which flowed in abundance from their eyes. The good Agatha, who witnessed all these demonstrations of joy, could not refrain from expressing her satisfaction by many confused expressions and significant gestures. Even Gramani forgot himself at this moment; his malignancy was torpid, and his rankling hatred remained motionless in his perfidious heart: an idea of repentance struck him—a slight desire to abjure his principles, and to imitate so many virtues, entered his mind; he was even at the point of throwing himself at Rhodiska's feet, discovering all his baseness, and intreating her forgiveness, as well as that of her injured family, but shame restrained him. He reflected that such a mortifying confession, although it might obtain the pity and forgiveness of those he had so cruelly wounded, yet it could not fail, in the eyes of his associates, to expose him to their

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taunts,

taunts, and to give them reason to accuse him of weakness and pusillanimity. This reflection made him groan ; he blushed at his want of courage, and gradually strengthened himself in the resolution of carrying his infamous projects into execution. Thus with bad men, the fear of ridicule is far stronger than any inward incitement to virtue ; they dread the one, and have only slight intervals of inclination towards the other.

In spite of all his intrepidity in vice, Gramani was not at ease ; Rhodiska's unalterable attachment to her husband, gave him continual alarm. He dreaded an *eclaircissement* between them, which would have brought to light his forgeries and impositions, and have exposed his abominable character in all its dark colours. Besides, Lucinda might not be trust-worthy ; the attachment of a woman of her description, especially for a man of his, is never of any solidity : interest he knew to be her sole motive, and generosity was not a trait in
his

his character. Through hopes of the protection, and sharing the superior munificence of Giovanni and the Rosomaskis, she might reveal to them the ground-work of the late mysterious scene. To prevent her betraying him, Gramani resolved to sacrifice her to his own security ; he demanded, under pretences which he very well knew how to frame, an order to shut her up for life. He obtained it without difficulty, because his official situation prevented him from being suspected of acting upon slight grounds—much less without a shadow of justice. Lucinda was, therefore, taken away at a moment when she least expected such a reward, and shut up in a dungeon of the castle. Gramani took possession of all the furniture and jewels, linen and clothes, of which he had pretended to make her a present. Such was the usual conduct of this disgrace to manhood, as covetous as wicked, towards all those women who were unfortunate enough to listen to his proposals. So soon as he was tired

of their company, he sought some pretence of quarreling with them, turned them out of the house in which he had placed them, and made them give up not only all they had received from him, but even despoiled them of what they had saved from the liberality of those who had preceded him ; yet none of them dared to complain, so much do women in their situation stand in awe of a man in his. They thought themselves happy in escaping the fate of Lucinda.

CHAP. VI.

ANOTHER reason, for Gramani's wishing to get rid of Lucinda, was, that he wanted his country-house for those little excursions which he had been for some days in the habit of making with the Countess del Piombino. An intimacy with vice destroys all sensibility of shame. Women who dread it whilst they keep in the road of virtue, have more intrepidity when they stray out of it; that timidity, so natural to the sex, is entirely lost with the modesty and restraint which are their greatest ornaments: they throw off the most sacred duties, trample on the laws of society and decency,

and despise the dictates of honour and religion. The Countess had arrived at this point, and Gramani no sooner made her the proposal of visiting his rural retreat, than she readily accepted it, and would have put it into execution on that very day. They had scarcely reached the house before the Count del Piombino, to whom Gramani had, in one of their revels, given a key of it to use at his pleasure, entered, bringing with him another lady. The sight of his wife in such a place neither gave him surprise nor anger. The Countess, no less bold, bore the shock of this unforeseen accident without shewing the least symptoms of confusion; she received her husband with the same ease as she would have done if he had been one of her party. The ease of this polite couple restored to Gramani that which he had lost through surprise and fear. The Count's mistress, no less daring than the rest, accosted the Countess with all the familiarity of an old acquaintance, and was received as such.

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They were laughing and jesting on the oddness of their rencounter, when the arrival of Gramani's wife put an end to this scene of mirth, and rendered this temple of pleasure the field of as bloody a battle as could be expected from such sort of combatants.

Signora Gramani had long lost all those youthful graces which inspire the other sex with desire ; but being weary of a widowed pillow, she had pitched upon Gramani, who was youthful and athletic, to be the partner of the rest of her days. Gramani, who, at that time, was not rich, very readily agreed to exchange his liberty for the widow's gold, of which she had a great store ; but he had not long possessed himself of the latter before he began to reclaim more of the former than his wife liked. She found herself neglected—became suspicious, and her suspicions were too just not to lead to a discovery of her husband's infidelity.

As Gramani had not long been possessed
F 5 of

of his country-house, his wife had never known any thing of it till this very day, which was to be remarkable for odd meetings, when passing before the door by chance, she perceived at the door one of his servants, who was known to be the minister of his pleasures. Her slumbering suspicion was roused, and she imagined that she should have an opportunity of detecting and reproaching her faithless spouse. She stopped the carriage, quitted it, and pushed violently by the servant, who endeavoured in vain to stop her entrance. The mirth of the company within the house soon conducted her to the door of the apartment from whence the sounds issued. She opened it, and discovered the happy *parti quarré* in the height of their revelry. She was almost choaked with passion—her eyes sparkled with fury—she strove to speak, but uttered only some hoarse inarticulate sounds, like the bellowing of an enraged bull: she acted like one too, by upsetting all that came in her way. In a minute,

furniture, china, glass, mirrors, and vases, were one undistinguished wreck. Her husband, wishing to stop this excess of her fury, received a blow from the leg of a table, with which she had armed herself, that measured him at full length upon the floor, with all the appearance of a man in a sound sleep, whom the raging storm could not rouse from his lethargy. The Countess, who was flying to his assistance, instantly shared the same fate, and was extended by the side of Gramani. The Count, seeing his wife's disgrace, was eager to revenge it: he seized the opportunity, when Signora Gramani was stooping down to pick up the weapon which had dropped from her hand, to leap upon her back, and endeavour to pinion her powerful and dreaded arms; but she rose as soon as she felt her unusual burthen, and by a quick motion, pitched him head foremost to the ground, where she would have given him some further chastisement, if she had not had to prepare for another antagonist, who

was about to enter the lists against her. This was the Count's mistress, who, seeing her turn about to follow up her vengeance on her sprawling lover, flew at her back, destroyed her head-dress, her neck-handkerchief, and many other parts of her apparel, before she could turn about to defend herself; and as she was doing so, her enemy pursued her advantage, by seizing her ear-rings, one of which she forced from the ear, by tearing away the cartilage, at no small expence of blood which followed the laceration.

Signora Gramani burned to revenge her dress and her wound; but a table, behind which her enemy retreated, covered her from an attack. Whilst she was displaying all her address to dislodge the enemy from this cover, the Count and Countess, who had recovered from their temporary state of insensibility, approached her, and she was alarmed at the junction of so many powerful forces, which bid fair to overwhelm her, already pretty much exhausted
with

with the fatigue of the day. She bawled aloud for her coachman and footman to come to her assistance: they heard her, and wanted to enter; but Signora Trompettina, with the gardener, cook, and scullions, guarded the passage. Another battle now took place at the door, and the noise caused a cessation of arms between those within. At length the besieging party, being reinforced by the passengers, broke open the door, forced the passage way, drove Trompettina and her party before them, and the whole together rushed into the apartment where hostilities had commenced. Both sides being now reinforced, the engagement might have been renewed with increased vigour, if it had not luckily happened that the field of battle was so much thronged, that there was no room for the manœuvres of the hostile parties. Signora Gramani, whose ear gave her prodigious pain, and the thoughts of not having inflicted vengeance on the author still more, was indignant at this state of inactivity:

tivity : she again bellowed with rage, and attempted, but in vain, to use her arms. Not being able to make her enemies feel the weight of them, she wished to overpower them with her eloquence ; but her stature, not being of the highest standard, was against her putting her scheme into execution. In one corner of the hall stood a side-table, which had escaped the general wröck : she began to force a passage with her elbows towards it ; and when, with great perseverance and difficulty, she had reached it, she leaped upon it with that agility which surprised all the spectators ; who, judging of her want of elasticity by her rotundity, could not conceive how she could have contrived to get up. Her position now attracted all attention, and she poured forth the expressions of her anger and resentment, with such a torrent of language appropriate to the scene which she was describing, that the beholders and hearers instantly lost all thoughts of renewing hostilities, in their enjoyment of so much

much unexpected fun as this harangue occasioned them.

The Count and his mistress, Gramani and the Countess, taking advantage of their earnest attention, contrived, like wise folks, to steal away from this scene, which was not quite so agreeable to them as to those who were uninterested in it. Signora Gramani no sooner observed their flight, than she broke up her harangue, and, in spite of those present, who appeared anxious to have her continue it, she forced her way through them as fast as she could, hurried to her coach, and ordered a close pursuit of the flying enemy ; but she had met with so many obstructions before she could reach her carriage, that they had made good their retreat to the Count's palace, where she dared not renew her attack, in the face of a battery which must have been so strongly entrenched and numerously defended.

At night, when Gramani returned to his own house, he was denied admittance by
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the porter ; and, on the next day, his wife sued for a separation from him. Gramani did not oppose it ; and as he was the first to laugh at this adventure, he soon got all the laughers in the city on his side ; and his poor wife was obliged to bear the whole weight of their ridicule, for attempting to interfere in her husband's private amusements. Thus had Gramani the art of turning even his most disgraceful adventures to his advantage. His wife died a few days afterwards, in a paroxysm of rage.

The health of Rhodiska insensibly grew better every day : the attentions of her husband, who scarcely ever quitted her, recomposed her agitated mind ; and if the poison of jealousy was not quite expelled, yet it was so much smothered, that its effects were no longer perceptible. This happy change afforded her daughter the strength of supporting the absence of her lover. The letters which she received from him, and answered almost every post, served to dissipate her uneasiness, and she wholly
resigned

resigned her heart to joy; when, at length, one of them announced to her that Giovanni had concluded the business of his mission, and was then preparing to leave Paris on the day after writing it.

This intelligence, which filled her mind with the pleasing hope of being soon indissolubly united to the man of her choice, distracted Justiniano, who had industriously sought, but never been able to find, a fit opportunity of effecting his designs upon her. The Piombinos and Gramani reproached him with pusillanimity, and painted his brother's approaching triumph over him with so much sarcastic irony, that he resolved to make one desperate effort before his return.

Paulina's apartment was separated from her mother's by a little closet, which Agatha had taken possession of, in order to be at hand to attend upon either of them. This closet would have been very favourable to the views of Justiniano, but he must have the concurrence of Agatha, and had

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at first flattered himself with being able to corrupt her fidelity ; but, after several distant hints and attempts, he had given it over as impracticable. He had observed that Paulina's chamber overlooked the garden, and at night he pretended to retire, only to slip into it, and to find some method of ascending to one of the windows. The night was beautifully serene, and the moon displayed all its radiance ; he was, therefore, obliged to hide himself, to prevent his being seen, and his scheme frustrated.

As Agatha always remained with Rhodiska until she fell asleep, Paulina retired at an early hour ; and as it was excessively hot that night, she left all the doors and windows open. She had sunk into a profound repose, when Justiniano, seeing nor hearing any movement in the house, left his lurking-place ; and having fixed the garden ladder against the window, mounted it, and entered the room with a mixture of impatience and trouble. He advanced towards Paulina, whose face bore, at that instant,

instant, so many interesting characters of innocence, beauty, and virtue, that remorse entered his soul, and intimidated him; he trembled, and retreated a pace or two: his imagination, chilled by fear, made way for his reason to hold up to him the infamy of his attempt. He formed the generous resolution of giving it up; but the taunts which the Piombinos and Gramani would not fail to lavish upon his abandoning his project, when success was within his grasp, stopped him, and he was about to return. At that instant he felt himself seized by the arms, and pulled to the further end of the room.

“What! Signor,” cried Agatha, for it was she who either had at that instant luckily quitted the chamber of Rhodiska, who had fallen asleep, or had been disturbed by the noise which he made, “is it you, who dare thus to forget what you owe to my mistress, and, in her person, your own brother—is it you who can thus insult, beyond reparation, a family who
deserve

deserve your respect, and violate the most sacred rights of honour and humanity?—Fly, Signor, fly, and avoid a discovery which would cover you with infamy. If you would bribe me to silence, it must be by a sincere repentance; and only a more respectful conduct in future towards my young mistress, will ever obtain you her pardon for the insult you have offered her.”

Justiniano, in the utmost shame and confusion, promised her all this, and retired by the same way he had entered.

Paulina had awakened at the entrance of Agatha, and heard all the conversation; but her fright at the danger she had escaped, had kept her speechless and motionless till Justiniano was gone, and Agatha, by fastening the windows, had prevented all danger of his return. She then called Agatha to her, and embraced her in the tenderest manner; and as soon as her emotions allowed her the power of utterance, she said—

“Is it possible that Justiniano, the brother

ther of Giovanni, can have been capable of this excessive perfidy and baseness—that his blind passion can have made him forget the respect which he owes not only to my sex, but to his brother's regard for me?—My dear Agatha, let us conceal his crime and my shame; let my father, especially, be ignorant of this atrocious offence, lest a desire to avenge it should endanger his own life; he would spill the last drop of his blood to wipe away the affront which has been offered to me. Let Giovanni never know the weakness of his brother; let us spare his worthy heart the pangs which a hatred of his brother, however just, must occasion it. Justiniano is my lover's brother; if he should sacrifice him to his resentment, the cries of offended nature would destroy his happiness: after having avenged, he would hate me, perhaps, because he would think he had loved me too well. Justiniano is young—he may still recover his virtue; he may lose all his designs upon me, when he shall see
that

that I do not harbour resentment. When I shall have become the wife of his brother, my person will be sacred ; and, till that moment, I shall carefully avoid seeing or speaking to him."

Agatha approved this mode of conduct, and it was resolved to bury this transaction in oblivion : but Justiniano, who knew he had not deserved such lenity, had no sooner reached home, than he experienced the most violent sensations : he imagined that he beheld the offended and indignant Paulina in the arms of her mother, bathing her face with her tears, and reposing in her bosom, the cause of her excessive grief. He saw this tender mother putting into the hand of her husband the sword of vengeance : but what troubled him most, was the idea of his brother's return ; he startled at the sight of him beholding his friends in grief and consternation ; he saw him, inflamed at the recital of his treachery, blush at the infamy of his own blood.

Daybreak put an end to a night of the
utmost

utmost restlessness, and only the resolution which he had taken to change his conduct, gave the least composure to his disturbed imagination. As a beginning, he set about making an apology to her whom he had so grossly offended. Not daring to appear personally before her, he took his pen, and, after many attempts which displeased him, he, at length, finished the following short billet.

“ VIRTUOUS PAULINA,

“ For my brother’s sake, pity the basest of men; conceal his infamous attempt, and, if possible, blot it for ever from your memory—my own shame and remorse have sufficiently avenged you: I abjure, I detest my follies. Till I shall be assured of your forgiveness, I shall blush to call myself the brother of Giovanni.”

This

This billet was put into the hands of Agatha, who, after having read it, gave it to her young mistress. After concerting between them for some time, the following answer was returned.

“ If your repentance be as sincere as you represent it to be, I ought not to withhold the forgiveness which you desire. It is from your future conduct that I shall judge whether you deserve it, as also that I should forget the affront you have offered me. It would be dreadful for me to be compelled to despise and hate the brother of Giovanni ; it would be a gratification to me to think him worthy of my esteem, and to bestow on him my friendship. You know how you may obtain it.”

Justiniano

Justiniano expected an answer with the utmost impatience ; and when it arrived, he opened it with a trembling hand : he thought himself so very guilty, that he scarcely dared hope for pardon. He read the billet several times over, and was transported at its contents ; it fully confirmed him in his resolution of amendment, and gave him so much confidence, that he assumed the courage to go and return Paulina thanks in person, and to be assured of his forgiveness from her own lips. He found her with her mother : his appearance covered her face with crimson ; and Justiniano was embarrassed and troubled, lest her mother should perceive, and demand the cause of it. He after a while summoned sufficient resolution to address Paulina, but what a change was there in his manner !—instead of the young, bold, and presumptuous Justiniano, he was timid, disconcerted, and so humbled, that even Paulina felt something like pity for him, and wished him reconciled to virtue and himself.

himself. He strove to read in their eyes if his crime was known to them ; he observed their looks, and yet dreaded to meet them. If he eyed Rosomaski or Rhodiska, he thought he perceived anger and indignation in their countenances. At length Agatha left the room, and he made some excuse for following her. She was touched with his situation, and said to him—"Be composed—no person but my young mistress and myself knows what has passed ; keep your promise, and all will be forgotten."

A criminal, condemned to death, does not receive a reprieve with a more heart-felt joy than Justiniano felt at this assurance. When he returned to the company, he reassumed tranquillity, and something like gaiety ; and Paulina, who guessed at what had afforded him composure, contrived to add to it by a friendly and familiar tone of conversation, which she maintained with him on the subject of their hopes of his brother's speedy return.

Whilst

Whilst the wandering heart of Justiniano was thus resuming that tranquillity which virtue ever inspires, vice gangrened those of the Piombinos and Gramani, who were for some days ignorant of this change in their associate.

CHAP. VII.

THE affairs of Gramani were at that time in a desperate situation : by the death of his wife, he had lost the whole of her property, which, in her just resentment, she had bequeathed to her own relations ; and the perquisites of his office were inconsiderable. He had borrowed considerable sums for the Count, for which he had

become joint security, although the whole had been squandered away to support the luxury of the Piombinos. Gramani knew that the Count stuck at no means to procure money, but never troubled his head with the thoughts of repaying it; and as his person was protected from the law, he was aware that the whole weight of the debt must fall upon himself. Gramani's last stake depended on the marriage of Giovanni with Moceniga, which could not fail of enriching the Piombinos, and he saw himself on the brink of losing it, as he had no doubt that Giovanni would put an end to those hopes, by his union with Paulina immediately after his return: he therefore proposed to the Piombinos to seize Giovanni before he could reach Genoa, and to convey him to his seat in the country, where he might be confined till he had married Moceniga, which would ensure not only a pardon for their violence to his person, but a partition of his immense wealth.

Count

Count Piombino, at first, hesitated at the thoughts of the danger attending this bold and desperate stroke, and the disgrace which would accrue to them from a failure : he desired some time to consider. The Countess, however, who was not easily intimidated, soon found means to procure his consent, by assuring him that the matter might be so managed, as to throw all the danger, and, in case of failure, all the obloquy on the shoulders of Gramani ; whilst, if the attempt should succeed, they would reap all the benefit, and revive the splendour of their house.

The Count, who was not withheld from so atrocious an attempt by any delicacy, was easily persuaded by this assurance, and, with his usual indolence, left the Countess to settle every thing with Gramani.

The urgency of this affair so pressed upon the heart of Gramani, that only a few hours elapsed before he called again to hear the Count's resolve. The Countess informed him that her husband was out of

the way, and that it was always best he should be so when any business of consequence was to be transacted.—“He is but a weak, silly, timorous man,” added she: “why did you, who know him so well, propose such a master-stroke to him? It was to me you should have addressed it. His weak nerves have been so affected ever since, that I have been obliged to assure him that matters might be so managed as not to endanger either your or his character, in case things should turn out contrary to our wishes: they may be so, if my advice be followed. In the first place, our castle must not be the place to which Giovanni is to be conveyed, for that would implicate us; but there are many other places, which will be infinitely better suited to our purposes—for instance, the ruins of the Castle of Montobio* have still some
strong

* This castle formerly belonged to the noble Genoese family of the Fiescos, the last descendants of which perished in a conspiracy against the government, about the middle of the 16th century. John Lewis Fiesco, the elder brother, was drowned
in

strong subterranean dungeons, where he may be kept securely ; and as it has had no occupier for a considerable length of time, no suspicion can attach to any person from the circumstance of Giovanni's being confined there, unless to the numerous gang of banditti who infest the mountains."

"Be that the place then," replied Gramani.

"It will be easy for you," continued the Countess, "to cause the persons who are to execute this enterprize, to be engaged in such a manner as that they shall neither know by whom, nor against whom they are employed ; so that, at all events, we may hug ourselves in security."

Gramani easily comprehended that the Piombinos were willing to reap the benefit,

in the midst of the tumult, by falling over the side of one of the gallies. Jerome, the younger brother, maintained a siege against the troops of the state, in this castle, which suffered considerably : he himself was taken and beheaded in it. Since that epoch, the castle had been suffered to run to ruins.

without incurring the disgrace of this shameful and desperate undertaking : he was not ignorant that when an inferior engages in a conspiracy with a superior, the former constantly bears the burthen of a defeat. But he was too deeply concerned to retreat : at the worst, it was only flying from Genoa, which, he foresaw, must otherwise be the case ; and he concurred with the Countess in all her propositions.

“ As to Justiniano,” added the Countess, “ I know not whether he may be safely entrusted with this part of our scheme or not.”

“ Undoubtedly not,” replied Gramani ; “ I have not seen him for some days till yesterday, when I asked him how he progressed in his designs upon Paulina ? He answered, that he was ashamed of having entertained ideas against the virtue of so strictly honest a woman, and the happiness of his brother ; and added, that he had totally abandoned them. I pretended to coincide with him in his reformation, and
praised

praised his self denial ; but he was not to be laughed out of his new system of morality : I therefore conclude that he is as changeable as the wind ; and, besides, I think him too much attached to his brother, ever to engage heartily in our present scheme."

" I am of your opinion," said the Countess, " and therefore let us leave both him and the Count entirely out of the question, and proceed by ourselves with the strictest secrecy and caution:"

Gramani observed that no inconsiderable sum would be wanting for these purposes, and the Countess told him to borrow as usual, and the Count should lend his name.

As Sardine had informed Gramani that Giovanni might be hourly expected, there was no time to be lost, and Gramani hastened home, and imparted his designs to Guarco, another of his domestics; whom he had pitched upon to succeed Sardine, when he pushed the latter into the service

of Rosomaski. Guarco was instantly dispatched to find six persons who were trustworthy, and suited to the enterprize. As such people were easily met with in Genoa, it was not long before Guarco returned to inform Gramani of his success. Gramani bade him to lead them to the opposite side of the mountains, and to wait near the road from Paris till Giovanni should pass; they were then to follow, and take a favourable opportunity of seizing him and his servant, for Sardine had informed Gramani that Giovanni had taken only one with him, and to carry them to the ruins of the Castle of Montobio, in one of the dungeons of which he was to leave them under the care of his hirelings, and to return with all possible dispatch with the news of their success.

Previously, however, to Guarco's departure, Gramani sent once more to enquire of Sardine whether Giovanni was returned, and was informed that he was not, but that
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the family expected him hourly. Gramani then hastened off Guarco, with orders to lose no time in getting to his station.

Guarco was no sooner gone than Gramani hastened back to acquaint the Countess Piombino with the steps which he had taken, and which she approved. They began to reflect, however, that the seizure of Gramani would not ensure his marriage with Moceniga, with which they did not expect he would ever comply, whilst there were hopes of Paulina. They inveighed bitterly against the folly (as they termed it) of Justiniano, in giving up his design of rendering it impossible for his brother ever to marry her. The Countess hinted to Gramani, that as he was rid of his wife, he might supply the place of Justiniano, and carry off Paulina, which would equally answer their purposes. Gramani, who had not been able to view the charms of Paulina with indifference, but was deterred by the pretensions of Justiniano from entertaining any sinister views against her, was

inflamed at this proposal, and readily agreed to undertake the business. Thus their scheme of seizing Giovanni, which had at first been planned only from the impulse of the moment, to defer the total destruction of their hopes, and had been set about without considering the steps by which it was to be followed, became consistent, and assumed the probability of ultimate success. Gramani was to exert himself to carry off Paulina, and Giovanni was to be kept out of the way till he had effected it, without knowing to whom he was indebted either for his detention or deliverance.

Whilst these plots were framing against the happiness of the Rosomaskis at Genoa, a circumstance favourable to it was preparing at Cracow, by the release of their friend Ludowico.

One night as he was conversing as usual with Zedeo, they were alarmed by the noise which Zedeo's guards made at the door of his dungeon, as they were pushing back its reluctant bolts and bars. Ludo-
wico

wiseo had only just time to escape into his own cell, and Zedeo to put his bed before the aperture, ere the door was opened. Ludowico heard the guards bid Zedeo follow them : he had not the least doubt but that their intercourse had been discovered, and that the guards were come to prevent it, by removing his companion to another more distant dungeon ; he himself dreaded lest the discovery should draw further severities upon him. The night, however, passed over without giving him any cause of alarm.

In the morning, when his guards came to visit him, instead of bringing his daily provisions as usual, they began to knock off his chains, and ordered him to follow them. Ludowico knew not what to make of this order, but he did not draw a favourable omen from it : his own fate gave him little uneasiness, but he could not help exclaiming, in a silent ejaculation—" Ah, my dear friends ! if Heaven is about to tear me from you, I hope it will raise you up another

ther friend, whose attachment is equally firm, and will prove more effectual to serve you !”

He followed the guards with a firm step, but was surprized when he found that they left the subterraneans, and ascended into the upper part of the citadel. After several turnings and windings, they knocked at a little door, which was soon opened to them, and Ludowico now perceived himself in light, airy apartments, elegantly furnished. The guards then left him, and he was ordered to follow the person who had opened the door to them. His new guide conducted him to a door, at which he knocked, and it was opened by Zedeo, who had a melancholy air.

“My dear friend !” said Zedeo, “you see, I have kept my promise with you, of setting you at liberty as soon as I should have it in my power. Alas ! I am indebted for it to a melancholy catastrophe. When we were interrupted last night, the guards conducted me to the door of my
5 father’s

father's chamber, whom I found at the last extremity : the certain prospect of approaching death had banished all those mistaken notions of honour which had caused his harsh treatment, and had revived all his tenderness for me. He bade me approach, and gave me an affectionate embrace. The situation in which I beheld him had entirely subdued all my resentment, and he perceived that I was much affected.—‘ I have done you much injustice,’ said he, ‘ but my latter days have been employed in endeavouring to make you some atonement. ‘ Here is,’ added he, holding out a paper, ‘ the King’s appointment to the situation of Governor of this citadel, which I have so long held. There were many veterans who had a stronger claim to the situation than you could possibly have, but my former services have obtained for you the preference. I am sorry that I ever endeavoured to constrain your will, but I now leave you at free liberty to dispose of yourself as you please.’

“ Here

“ Here he was quite exhausted, yet he was apparently moved at my distress : the lamp of life was, however, quickly extinguishing, and he never uttered another word till he expired in my arms. I have discovered, among his papers, the cause of your confinement—it was an anonymous letter, which asserted that you were the sole cause of my ill success with Theresia; and advising him, if he still had that business at heart, to keep you out of the way till it should be settled :—it described your person, and mentioned your being at Jaroslow, and that you would return to Cracow in a day or two : the consequence was, I presume, that you were waylaid, and brought hither. There is the letter—it may serve you to trace out your enemy. I have thought that I could not show a greater respect to the memory of my father than by repairing his errors : I have therefore lost no time in releasing you ; and I assure you, that if I can recompense your unjust detention on my account by any services

services in my power, you may at any time command them."

Ludowico condoled with him on his loss, expressed his gratitude in proper terms, and retired, in the most ardent impatience to embrace his dear friends once more. He flew to the house, and enquired instantly of the servant who opened the door, how they all were?

"My mistress is well," replied the servant; "you know where to find her."

Ludowico was astonished at this reply, which had a bad presage; but he lost no time in going to the sitting-room, where the family usually passed their time when they had no visitors.

Theresia was much astonished, and no less pleased, at the appearance of Ludowico, which of itself was a sufficient proof that the heaviest accusation against him in Dorothea's letter was false. If he had been the counterfeit Rugonner, he could not have been the living Ludowico. She had
never

never been able to persuade herself to entertain suspicions of his honour, and he was then as spotless in her eyes as ever. After he had saluted her, he eagerly demanded news of his other friends. Theresia, without replying, rose and took Rhodiska's letter from her secretary, and presented it to him. As he perused it, she now and then would send a glance towards him, to observe his countenance; but she observed very little alteration, except a slight degree of contempt at reading Dorothea's charges against himself. The similarity of the hand-writing of her letter to that of the anonymous note which had caused his long confinement, instantly struck him; he pulled the letter out of his pocket, and compared them—they were evidently of the same manufacture. Theresia observed that he smiled: he handed the two letters to her, and the same observation instantly forced itself upon her mind.

“ I begin to see, somewhat indistinctly indeed,”

indeed," said she, "into this mystery: this anonymous letter has caused your long absence."

Ludowico nodded an affirmative, and proceeded to give her an account of all that had happened to him since his leaving them at Vistulof. Theresia told him that she had always believed Dorothea's letter to be worthy of the utmost contempt, and she could not persuade herself that those whom it chiefly concerned, could ever have viewed it in any other light. She confessed that she had taken great pains to discover if he were really the counterfeit Rugonner, not to satisfy herself, but his friends at Genoa, of his strict honour.—"I have never," added she, somewhat blushing, "failed to entertain such an opinion of it, as nothing but a demonstration of the contrary could have shaken."

Ludowico expressed the highest sense of gratitude for her confidence in him, and declared his resolution of leaving Cracow the next morning, on his route to Genoa.

Theresia

Theresia was very much disconcerted at this intention, and endeavoured to divert him from it, by telling him that he would probably lose his journey, as she had taken care to remit the Rosomaskis a considerable sum of money, which she had in her hands belonging to them, and had every reason to expect that they would lose no time in returning to Cracow, after they should have learnt that she had recovered their son Ladislaus."

"By what strange event has that been brought about?" said Ludowico. "Has Mrs. Vendost been struck with remorse? for I am persuaded that the child whom I saw at her house was Ladislaus."

"You are not mistaken," replied Theresia; and she made him the recital of the melancholy catastrophe of that unhappy woman.

Ludowico observed, that it was very unfortunate that the parents should have been snatched away on the eve of regaining their lost treasure, and repeated his resolution
to

to commence his journey to Cracow on the ensuing morning, to hasten their return, and to be at hand to protect them on the road from any further attempts of their invisible and implacable enemy.

The latter part of this intention somewhat reconciled Theresia to the former.

“I trust to you to hurry them away from Genoa,” said she; “and I beg you to tell them that I shall count every moment an age till I see them again. But you will not travel alone? You must be aware that we are watched by this fiend-like enemy of the Rosomaskis: as he knows what comfort and assistance they will derive from your presence, he will take every step to prevent your coming together again.—Ah! if you should fall into some new snare, I shall be miserable—since I know it will make our friends so.”

If Ludowico had not been impenetrably blind, or absolutely convinced that Theresia was indifferent to all his sex, it was impossible but he must have discovered something

something in her speech of a more than common solicitude for his own safety, notwithstanding the *finesse* with which she attempted to turn it off by a little *detour*. She would not have been sorry if she had opened his eyes a little on the change which he had operated in her ; but he continued in darkness, and she could not prevail upon herself to advance another step to enlighten him. He merely replied, that he would take such precautions as should for once baffle their lynx-eyed enemy.

They then took leave of each other, and the rising sun beheld Ludowico on the road to Genoa.

CHAP. VIII.

THE Rosomaskis now wanted little other addition to their happiness than the return of their benefactor, Giovanni, whom they most impatiently expected. Rhodiska's fit of jealousy had almost totally subsided, and Paulina was not only overjoyed to witness her mother's convalescence, but she was gratified to see the alteration in the behaviour of Justiniano, who saw her seldom, and then always treated her with that respect which was due to the intended wife of his brother. The Piombinos, too, in order to blind their victims, expressed their hopes to congratulate them very soon
on

on the return of Giovanni, and talked of the marriage between him and Paulina as a matter perfectly well understood. Flattered by these hopes, the so long unfortunate Rosomaskis began to have a distant gleam of happiness before them, which would have been nearly complete, if all doubts of Ludowico's conduct had been satisfactorily explained. To be obliged to entertain the most distant doubts of the sincerity of the friend of his youth, and the son of his preserver, stuck like a barbed arrow in the breast of Rosomaski.

It has been mentioned that the suite of rooms which the Rosomaskis occupied, were detached from the main body of the house, and separated from it by a garden. The situation of this garden was delightful, as it afforded a view of a considerable part of the suburbs of the city, and an uninterrupted prospect over the whole of the bay. Rosomaski and Rhodiska passed the greater part of every fine day under the shade of some chesnut trees, in enjoying the scenery,
the

the marine part of which was perfectly novel to them, who had never before witnessed any thing of the kind on a larger scale than that which the banks of the narrow, winding Vistula afforded them. The arms of the bay, spreading till they appeared to lose themselves in the vast expanse of the Mediterranean; the innumerable vessels which glided past, bound to some further port, and moved along the horizon like faint, distant clouds; those others, which were bound up to Genoa, and as they approached, seemed to rise from the bosom of the waters, and then fly majestically over their surface; the humble barks which flitted about them in all directions, obedient to the oars of the labouring watermen; whilst the sea-fowl, now skimming the water, and now soaring aloft in elegant curves and spiral lines, hovered around them, like curious spectators of those daring invaders of their other element:—all these scenes combined, afforded them new and grand sensations,

which they were now sufficiently easy in their minds to enjoy.

Paulina, also, passed the greater part of the day in the garden; but her favourite time was when the sun's glaring light had given way to the milder influence of the moon, and the busy sons of commerce had suspended their labours, only to resume them again with increased vigour at its return. These softer scenes were better suited to her present disposition, as they did not disturb her visions of expected happiness. Often, when looking at the moon, would she be pleased to think that, probably, Giovanni was hastening homewards with an impatience equal to her own, and was at that moment beholding the very same object.—“If there be a sympathy in souls,” she would say, “then will his be acting in unison with mine, and enjoying the same meditations.”

These reflections soothed her mind, and yielded her a serenity which shielded it from the agitation of impatience.

As every fresh-coming day brought with it a more than ordinary degree of expectation, Paulina would seldom withdraw to her apartment till there were no hopes of seeing Giovanni that night. It could not well be said that she then retired to rest ; it was only to converse with Agatha concerning him, and to be again buoyed up with hopes of happiness on the ensuing day.

Another day had passed, as the former ones, in disappointment. Evening came, and the moon again beheld her votary at her usual post in the garden, which was a sure proof that Giovanni was not returned. The evening almost rivalled the splendour of the brightest day ; the wide expanse of water, unruffled by rude winds, and no longer furrowed by the dashing keels, seemed to have formed its equilibrium : only one small bark disturbed its repose, and that was hastening towards the part of the shore nearest to the garden, as if to lay up for the night.

The drooping maid sat motionless; and any one who had seen her in that situation, would have taken her for an ornamental statue. At length, the breeze made a rustling noise amidst the foliage; she turned her head in the direction of the path which led from the main body of the house—she stood up to see whether any light passed, or there was any extraordinary movement to flatter her hopes: there was nothing of the kind. She sat down again, and reclined her head on her hand. After some little interval, she raised her head—looked at the moon—sighed, and, in a low, tremulous, plaintive tone, began to warble an Italian air.

She had just finished the last strain, and the querulous notes still sounded on the breeze which seemed to bear them away, when she felt herself rudely seized from behind, her arms pinioned to her sides, and a bandage placed over her mouth, before the shock, which sent the blood mantling to her heart, would allow her to give an
alarm.

alarm. A cloak was then thrown all over her, so that she could see nothing, and she was lifted from the ground, and rapidly carried to some little distance. By the motion of the person who bore her, which then became cautious and slow, like that of one who carried a heavy burthen up stairs, she concluded they were getting over the garden-walls by a ladder. Without dreading any consequence to herself, she began to struggle, in hopes of both falling together to the ground, or of compelling the ruffian to let her go; but his nerves bespoke him a descendant of Hercules. Paulina was convinced that she was right in her conjecture, when she perceived that he soon afterwards appeared to descend. Hapless innocence!—to cry out was impossible—to struggle, vain! The ruffians again went on rapidly for some time: after a small pause, the one who held Paulina went on with caution, and presently seated himself, still holding her fast in his arms. After another short

interval, the motion of putting off a boat from the shore, and the noise of the sounding oars, gave her to understand that she was launched on the water. It was the case; and she was in that very bark which, only some few minutes before, had engaged her wandering eyes. After an hour's passage, the bark again struck the shore. Paulina was landed, and put into a carriage, which waited on the beach for the purpose of receiving her, and started with all the rapidity that four excellent horses could give it, and the road would permit.

All the fortitude which had hitherto supported Paulina now vanished, and she fell senseless on the seat of the carriage. When she came to herself again, her ears were saluted with the noise of branches of trees striking against the glass windows, as the carriage passed rapidly by them. Her apprehensions were increased by knowing that she was in the midst of a forest; she dreaded lest the frightful silence of the wood should add to the boldness of her ravishers.

ravishers. Her agitation shook her so dreadfully, that her guards were alarmed lest the bandage should suffocate her, and they removed it.

Not a word was spoken by either of them; and Paulina also remained as still as if she had not yet recovered her senses, thinking it the best way to avoid any immediate outrage.

As they left the wood, the light of the moon penetrated the carriage: Paulina, fearfully casting up her eyes, saw before her a man, whose hard and ferocious features added to her terror, and only gave her more repugnance to look at the other who sat beside him. At length, curiosity to know who were the authors of her misfortune prevailed, and casting a glance with the rapidity of lightning on the other ruffian, she beheld another figure no less shocking than the former; but both were equally unknown to her.

At length, assuming a little more courage, she addressed them in the most moving

strains, and intreated to know why they offered her this violence, and under whose orders they acted?—but her prayers and tears were without success—she might as well have addressed herself to two statues.

After a while, she perceived, from the jolting of the carriage, and the noise which the wheels made, that they were in a main road. The hope of passing through some village where she might draw the inhabitants to her rescue by her cries, began to give some little consolation to her wounded mind. The better to deceive her Arguses, she feigned to be more tranquil, and endeavoured to inspire them with a confidence which she might turn to her advantage. Perceiving lights at a distance, her heart beat, and leaped for joy. But this satisfaction was only of short duration; before they reached the dwellings whence the lights proceeded, her guards replaced the bandage over her mouth, let down the carriage blinds, and took those precautions which convinced her that they were very far

far from slumbering in that security which she wished. When they had passed beyond the houses, the bandage was again removed.

After having travelled some time longer, without meeting with any inhabited place, Paulina again discerned lights at a distance, and seeing that she approached them by degrees without her guards thinking of replacing the bandage, she secretly congratulated herself, and thought their prudence had failed them. She breathed as gently as possible, not to bring to their recollection that she was in existence, and to draw them from the apathy in which they seemed buried. She was preparing to make use of the liberty which they gave her, when she perceived the wheels of the carriage move lightly over a drawbridge: the clanking of the chains, which she heard a moment after, gave her to understand that they had raised it the instant the carriage passed over, and that she was at length arrived at her prison. From that moment, all the courage which she had

assumed forsook her, and gave place to despondency and the most dreadful alarms. Her guards seized her, more dead than alive, and carried her into the interior of the house: she was carried into an apartment, not very spendidly nor superfluously furnished, but very well lighted. Three women made their appearance, and informed her that they were ordered to wait upon her.

Stupified with horror, Paulina imagined that the respect which these women paid her, was only a refinement of barbarity; and that he who had laid this horrid plot, of which she was to be the victim, was about to appear and undeceive her, in the most cruel manner. In order to try what power she had over her pretended attendants, as well as to give vent to her distracted mind, she desired to be left alone; and she had scarcely pronounced the words before she was obeyed.—“Alas!” cried she, “what security is there in this treacherous respect? Ought it not, on the contrary,

contrary, to assure me that they think me perfectly secure, and do not dread any of my efforts to escape ?”

As it was impossible to entertain a thought of sleeping, Paulina threw herself into a chair, and fell into the most gloomy reveries, in dreadful expectation every moment of seeing the author of this horrid manœuvre make his appearance; but the night passed over without the least disturbance.

If it was a dreadful night for Paulina, it was no less so for her parents. Agatha had waited for Paulina long beyond the usual time; she was almost overcome with want of sleep, and she expected that Paulina would keep her awake an hour or two after she entered her apartment, in conversation respecting Giovanni, as usual. Her patience was at length exhausted; she went into the garden—she searched every part of it without success—she began to call in a low tone of voice, at first, to avoid giving any alarm to Rhodiska and

Rosomaski : her fears increased, and the name of Paulina rang through every part of the garden—but with no better success. Agatha then grew frantic, and burst into the apartment of Rhodiska and Rosomaski, to tell them the fatal news. Rosomaski instantly dressed himself, and ran through the garden—Paulina was not there. He alarmed the domestics in the main body of the house, but she was not there. The garden was again searched, but there were no traces whatever to lead to any discovery of this horrid mystery. Rhodiska was wringing her hands in all the agony of the most direful apprehensions; and Rosomaski endeavoured to console her, by telling her that as the city gates were locked, and no one suffered to pass till two hours after daybreak, it would be impossible that Paulina could be carried off before that time, if any such attempt had been made; and that he would not only cause all the outlets from the city to be watched, but every part of the interior to be searched, till she

was

was recovered. Rosomaski then left Rhodiska, a little composed by his assurances, to go and put these measures into effect. His first step was to rouse Gramani, whom he thought to be his friend, and, as a magistrate, the properest person to give him advice and assistance in the present emergency.

Gramani declared his utmost readiness to lend every assistance in his power; and, dressing himself, he roused the sbirri, and ordered two of them to watch at each gate of the city, and to stop any carriage which should contain a young female of Paulina's description, which he gave them; the rest were ordered to make a strict search throughout the city.

When these steps had been taken, Gramani asked Rosomaski if he could fix his suspicions upon any person as likely to commit such an outrage as the carrying off his daughter?

"No one," replied Rosomaski.

"Is

“ Is there any one who has had access to the house in Giovanni's absence ? ”

“ Only his brother. ”

Gramani appeared lost in thought for some moments, and then asked Rosomaski if Justiniano had been acquainted with this affair.

“ No, ” replied Rosomaski, “ but I intend to do so, and to desire his interest and assistance. ”

Gramani appeared once more plunged in reflection, and muttered some unintelligible sentences, such as—“ He is a libertine, but he has a good heart in the main ”—“ Respect for his brother ”—“ Character ”—“ No, it cannot be ; ”—and then advised Rosomaski to go to him immediately. He, moreover, promised, that if Paulina was not found before the next noon, he himself would scour all the surrounding country to gain intelligence of her.

Rosomaski went to Justiniano's lodgings, and was informed that he had not been at home

home that night: neither the sentences muttered by Gramani, nor this last circumstance, made Rosomaski entertain the slightest suspicions of the honour of Giovanni's brother. He returned home, and found Agatha, in the phrenzy of distraction, at that moment relating the late midnight attempt of Justiniano upon Paulina. She closed her narrative by exclaiming—
“ Ah, God help me !—*they are not all birds of a feather that are reared in one nest !*”

This narrative, coupled with what had dropped from Gramani, and Justiniano's absence, brought suspicions of the latter into Rosomaski's breast; he would have been less uneasy, if he had been assured of Justiniano's guilt, as he knew that Paulina would prefer death to dishonour; and judged that Justiniano might be induced, by the fruitlessness of his attempts, to return to a proper respect for the intended wife of his brother. With the greatest difficulty he prevailed upon Rhodiska to go to her chamber, and to endeavour to
compose

compose herself, with the assurance that every thing had been, and would be done, to restore her Paulina to her arms.

Rosomaski again went out, without knowing whither—paraded every street—stopped at each house where he could perceive the least movement, and scrutinized every person who was abroad at that unseasonable hour, in hopes to see or hear something of his Paulina. Rhodiska retired to her chamber; but let those, who have experienced an excess of trouble and affliction, recall to their remembrance one of those nights, when the bitterness of the burning tears which overflowed their eyes, removed sleep to a distance from them—when nature, exhausted, solicited that repose which was denied to it; let them retrace the horrible visions with which their imagination tormented them—and they will form an idea of the manner in which Rhodiska passed the remainder of the night.

The day broke in upon Paulina, and discovered her a prey to the most racking sensations.

sensations. Two hours afterwards, one of the women entered, and asked if she wanted any thing?—a negative shake of the head was her only answer. Sometime afterwards, the women again entered, to know if she would choose breakfast? Paulina sighed, lifted up her eyes, bathed in tears, towards Heaven, and intreated to be left to herself. About the middle of the day, all the three women (for none of the other sex made their appearance) came in and served up a dinner, composed of a variety of delicacies, which Paulina regarded with an eye of disgust. The women moved the table towards the chair, which she had never quitted since she first sat down in it, and pressed her, in the most obliging manner, to take some nourishment. After being repeatedly pressed, she determined to eat a little.

When she had finished her slight repast, she again desired to be left alone—she was instantly obeyed. Her reflections then
became

became more poignant : alone—without help—without hope, what could she oppose to the infamous designs which she could not help imagining were intended against her? Surrounded by enemies, observed by mistrustful spies, she no longer regarded herself but as a victim devoted to the violence of the wretch who would undoubtedly make her pay dearly for the repose which he appeared to let her enjoy. Every hope of escape was fled. Could she flatter herself that, amidst the satellites of a wretch hired to guard her, there could be found a heart susceptible of pity for her situation? Could they have been corrupted by gold, the trifle which she had about her was very insufficient to tempt servants whom a powerful and prodigal master employed to favour his crimes. Despair deprived her of her remaining strength. Plunged into a languid despondency, she scarcely preserved the free use of her reason, which might become so necessary

necessary to her, and was on the brink of that fatal torpidity which might have so well served the views of her ravisher.

Towards the evening, the women returned, and conducted her into an inner chamber, intreated her to take some repose, and offered their services to undress her. This circumstance awakened her from the fatal lethargy, and brought back all her energy. She ordered the women to leave her, with a tone of authority which surprised them: they endeavoured to calm her, and to dissipate the fears with which they saw she was agitated; but neither their representations nor remonstrances could produce any effect on her resolute spirit. At length, finding that their presence only increased her transports, they left her, after having shewn her that she might shut herself in, by some bolts which were inside the door.

The instant they were gone, Paulina hastened to take the hint which they had given her; and when she was assured there
was

was no other entrance into the room, and that the door was secured, she experienced rather more ease. She then visited every corner—scrutinized the partitions and the boards of the floor: nothing occurred to give her any suspicion of a concealed opening. Every thing was formed in the most simple style; there was not a single cornice nor ornament which could mask a secret communication; the whole was so very plain, that the slightest and best-formed chink in the world might have been easily discerned.

Having thus, as she thought, assured herself against a surprise, she placed herself at the only window which was in the room, and presently heard the doors at the end of the galleries closed, one after the other. She trembled when she was thus separated from all society; she saw the lights extinguished in every window, and the most profound silence reigned in every part. The night was very dark, and for some time Paulina perceived no other object than the reflection
of

of her own light against the opposite wall; but she felt no inclination to change her situation.

At length she thought she heard a noise beneath her window, somewhat resembling that of a person walking through long grass. She listened with the utmost attention; but the noise had ceased, and the darkness would have prevented her seeing, if any one had been there: she was on the point of thinking that she had been deceived, when some person coughed gently. Being then convinced that there was some one below, having nothing more to fear, and hoping for some relief, she stood up, and endeavoured to open the window; but it mocked all her efforts. Presently a soft voice, like that of a female, distinctly pronounced these words—"Beware of sleeping, or you are lost: Fear not—I shall be with you in the moment of danger."

Paulina was seized with an involuntary trembling; she would have replied, but
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the rustling of the grass gave her to understand that the person who had spoken was gone, and that she was to expect no other explanation.

The darkness, which had produced no effect upon her before, now began to terrify her ; she shivered as she heard the hoarse winds bending the tops of the sturdy trees at a distance ; and the flapping of the wings of the birds of night, which every now and then struck against the glass, gave her to believe that the "*moment of danger*" was arrived. Nearly two hours passed in this agonizing suspense, when she heard the same voice, which now appeared to issue from beneath the floor, exclaim—"Hasten—carry your light into the next chamber, and remain there till I call you."

Surprised, and almost petrified, she looked round, and could not conceive whence the voice issued. She remained motionless, without knowing on what to resolve.

"You

“ You hesitate,” cried the voice, in a more imperious tone than before ; “ one minute more, and it will be too late.”

Determined by this authoritative tone, she took the light, and tremblingly obeyed. She listened attentively, in the most anxious suspense, to know how this adventure would terminate, and thought she heard some movement in the chamber which she had just quitted. She was wondering how any one could have entered it, when her ears were assailed by a long and mournful groan, like that of a man who breathed his last sigh. Instantly she heard the same voice call her by her name. She hesitated to move till it was repeated ; and then taking up her lamp with an aguish hand, she entered the inner room in the most inexpressible consternation ; her trembling limbs could scarcely support her, and her distracted eyes distinguished objects very confusedly.

“ Approach,” said the voice, “ and behold our common enemy—he has paid the forfeit of his crimes.”

Casting

Casting a fearful look at the bed, she beheld a man lying on his face, bathed in blood ; and near him a young female, who still held in her hand the crimsoned poniard with which she had given him the fatal blow.

Paulina looked earnestly at her deliverer, but she could not remember a single feature.—“ Who are you,” said she with a trembling voice, “ who have thus deigned to take pity on me ?”

“ It is not now a time to answer you,” replied the female ; “ let us first consult our safety, and how to withdraw ourselves from the power of the agents of the monster whom I have just sacrificed : they are no less dangerous than their perfidious master. Have you the courage to follow me ?”

“ I have the courage to do any thing to get out of this infamous prison.”

“ Well then, we have not a moment to lose,” said the young woman, presenting her crimsoned hand to Paulina. “ I will be your guide. You hesitate,” added she, with

with a firm voice : “ you are losing the only moment of safety. Will you wait till the pitiless banditti come to revenge their master’s assassination ? perhaps——”

At that moment Paulina heard a noise : her blood curdled—she cried out—“ I follow you.”

The stranger went to a pier-glass, touched a hidden spring, and the glass instantly sunk into the partition.—“ *Sée,*” cried the stranger to Paulina, who gave a look of surprise, “ how secure you were !”

A steep staircase, hollowed out of the wall, appeared before them : it was so narrow, that only one person could pass at a time ; and so low, that they were obliged to stoop. They had scarcely begun to descend, before Paulina heard a noise behind her ; she started, and feeling a violent blow on her head, fell down on one of the steps. She looked behind her, and beheld a dagger, whose blade feebly glittered where not covered with blood. She called out : her companion returned,

and asked sharply what ailed her? Terror had deprived Paulina of the power of speech, and she could only point towards the object of her alarm. The stranger looked down at her girdle.—“It is my poniard which I have dropped,” said she with a calm air.

“But the noise which I heard?” said Paulina.

“Was occasioned by your clothes sweeping the poniard down the stairs,” replied the stranger.

“But then the terrible blow which has almost stunned me?”

“Was the effect of your fear, which made you start, and strike your head against the ceiling.”

All these explanations were too plain and natural not to convince Paulina; but she felt an oppression at her heart, which convinced her that she was not as tranquil as she endeavoured to believe.

Having reached the bottom of the staircase, they pursued their course through a
long

long gallery, very narrow, but more lofty. The stranger walked on hastily ; but all at once, a current of air, circulating through this long winding passage, struck the light, and nearly extinguished it. She stopped suddenly ; and Paulina, who could not see what was the matter, did not fail to imagine that it was the approach of some new danger, or the appearance of some frightful object, till the guide explained the reason of her stopping.

Notwithstanding the fears which agitated the bosom of Paulina, she endeavoured to guess who could be this mysterious person, and she almost repented of having confided in her. When she considered her firmness and courage, she gained a little confidence ; but on the other hand, this firmness evinced that she was capable of any thing : besides, the assassination which she had coolly committed, proved that blood did not terrify her, and that she felt no remorse at spilling it : and yet,

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when she called to mind the gentle manners of the stranger, even in the midst of her sanguinary deed—when she heard the inspiring tone of her voice—when she thought on the astonishing manner in which she had preserved her, she was almost tempted to believe she was some supernatural being, whom the beneficence of heaven had sent to her succour, and her confidence was renewed.

As they left the gallery, they found themselves in a spacious hall, which appeared to have formerly served for a chapel and a cemetery : the remains of an altar stood in a remote corner, and some rotten benches strewed the pavement with their decayed yellow dust ; the great misshapen columns had been scooped out to receive gothic statues, most of which were sadly mutilated : torn books and moth-eaten pictures were scattered here and there : at intervals, they met with pieces of black cloth covered with white crosses, which

which must have been used for covering the coffins whilst the funeral ceremonies were performing.

The stranger walked undaunted through all these gloomy objects towards the altar ; Paulina followed her as close as possible, without daring to cast her eyes to the right or left. After having wandered for some minutes through the windings formed by the irregular columns, they arrived at an iron railing. The gate was shut—the guide pushed it ; but finding it above her strength, she desired Paulina to assist her. Paulina approached trembling ; and when she applied her hands to the bars, the cold damp which she felt, struck her very heart. The gate gave way with a creaking noise, which resounded through all the arches ; the whole railing shook, and a momentary vibration of several loose bars took place.

The stranger mounted the steps of the altar, and drew out from beneath the pedestal of one of the statues, a bunch of keys, the rattling of which caused all the

echoes again to resound. At that moment the stranger slipped her foot—fell against Paulina—pushed her down, and the light was extinguished. The consequence of such a fall on the stone steps might have been fatal to Paulina, if it had not been broken by some object which kept her from the ground.

The most profound silence succeeded this accident, and served to increase its horrors. Paulina, panic-struck, dared not call to her companion ; it appeared to her as if even her own voice, in the midst of the solemn darkness, would have been a new object of terror : she still hesitated, without having the courage to decide, when she felt herself seized by the arm ; her hair stood up, and speech was no longer in her power. The hand which had touched her instantly let go its hold ; and presently afterwards, she beheld a faint light on the pavement. It seemed as if a mountain was removed from her breast, when she beheld her companion, who picked up the lamp, and

and lighted it from a little bottle of phosphoric composition, with which she had taken the precaution to provide herself.

“ Let us remove from this place,” said the stranger, without any emotion.

Paulina was ready to obey ; and to raise herself up, she rested her hands on the objects which supported her. She felt a woollen stuff ; and looking at it, perceived it was one of that sort which she had before seen : it covered a bier which had served to remove corpses. Paulina shivered ; and her terrors were now so violent, that she suffered herself to be led along by the stranger without uttering a syllable. They left the sanctuary, and entered the nave of the chapel.—“ *The seventh pillar to the left,*” said the stranger ; and she began to count them as they proceeded. When she had numbered the seventh, she said—“ A statue of St. Roch—an epitaph on a grey marble ; here we must stop.”

She advanced a few paces, took one of the keys of the bunch which she held in her

hand, and applied it to the place of one of the eyes of a death's head, which was sculptured over the epitaph. After having tried several keys successively, she at length succeeded in opening the lock; she pushed the stone, and it turned without any difficulty on secret hinges. They discovered behind it an iron gate, which another key opened, and presented to their view a staircase, whence a sort of humid, cold mist issued, and had once more nearly extinguished the light.—“This is our way,” said the stranger to Paulina, pointing to the staircase.—Terrified at the new dangers which she had still to encounter, Paulina, in a feeble tone, asked whither that staircase led?

“I do not know,” replied the stranger seriously; “I am only certain that it will ultimately bring us into the open country.”

“If you have never been here before,” said Paulina, “how can you know that?”

“From the person who told me of its existence,” replied the stranger with confidence; “he told me by what signs to
discover

discover this passage ; and you see, hitherto, that he has not deceived me."

" But who are you ? For heaven's sake
——"

" You shall know that when we are out of this place ; you shall hear my history, and you will find that I am to be pitied, and more to be pitied than yourself, though the same person has been our persecutor."

" But forgive me if my fears are vain," said Paulina ; " I have been once deceived : you are not leading me into a new snare ?"

" I, Madam !" replied the stranger, with a tone of astonishment and reproach, " I betray you !—why then need I have troubled myself about you ? What snare can I lead you into, so dangerous as that from which I have rescued you, at the expence of my own life ?"—(Paulina held out her hand to her, as if to repair the injustice of her suspicions.)—" Come, come," added the stranger, we have only some few minutes more of trial to undergo, and we shall then enjoy the repose and liberty which we shall

owe only to our own courage and perseverance.”

They began to descend slowly ; their glimmering light discovered the walls painted with death's heads and human bones. When they arrived at the bottom of the staircase, curiosity made them take a view of surrounding objects. The place in which they were, was a large hall, or, rather, vault, whose walls were painted with the same emblems of mortality as the staircase ; in the middle stood a stone altar, on which was ranged a pile of bones in a pyramidal shape, and the whole ground was strewed with tombs, as appeared from the hillocks.

This sight was too gloomy to detain them long ; the stranger advanced towards one of the angles, and opened a door. whence there issued a current of air still more humid and fresh than any they had felt before. Their feeble light again menaced them with total darkness : the stranger, instead of it, took a torch which she found

at

at the foot of the altar, and lighted it.—
“ Now let us proceed,” said she; “ this vault is the only interval between us and the country.”

Paulina took hold of the stranger’s arm, and they began to traverse the immense caves dug on all sides, not without a dread of losing themselves in this labyrinth, which resembled those ancient works of art still existing in Egypt, and originally excavated for the same purpose—the interment of the dead.—“ It was recommended to me not to stray from the pillars,” said the stranger, “ so let us keep close to them.”

Those pillars were mis-shapen masses of stone at unequal distances, and without order, formed to support the earth, and prevent its giving way. The saltpetre, with which they were encrusted, made them shine, at a distance, with a brilliancy which terrified Paulina, until she recollected the cause of it.

They proceeded for some time without hearing any interruption of the deathlike

silence which reigned on all sides ; but, all at once, they imagined that they perceived the earth at intervals tremble under their feet. They stopped, and counted distinctly several violent blows, which appeared to be struck beneath them.—“ Do you hear ? ” said Paulina, drawing closer to the stranger.

“ Undoubtedly I hear,” replied she, quite unmoved ; “ but there is no mid-way for us—we must go on, or be discovered. Follow me, and fear nothing.”

They went on again, and at every step the blows became plainer ; presently they distinguished a multitude of blows, less loud than the former ones, but they were given in a more rapid and continued succession, like those of blacksmiths striking on an anvil. Paulina was little more than dragged along by her intrepid companion, who, in the persuasion that however inconceivable the noise appeared, they should find a natural cause for it, never once relaxed from her firmness. As they passed
between

between two immense pillars, a pale and livid figure came from behind one of them, and blowing with all its force on the torch, extinguished it.

CHAP. IX.

AT that instant Paulina perceived herself encircled by a vigorous arm, which, in spite of her efforts, separated her from her guide. She uttered the most piercing cries, which made the subterranean resound ; but without saying a word to her, those who held her hurried her quickly on. She faintly heard a noise resembling that of footsteps, which proceeded from the spot where she had left her companion : at length her ears were struck with a hollow sound

sound and a long groan, which died away in the extremity of the cavern. No longer doubting that the stranger had been sacrificed, the horror of her situation presented itself to her in the most frightful shape. The rapidity with which she was hurried along, finished her consternation, and she lost all sensibility.

When her swoon was over, she found herself in an apartment filled with a thick smoke ; a great brazier, lighted in the midst of a sort of hearth, tinged the surrounding objects with a red colour, which rendered them hideous. There was no other light in this apartment, whose walls, blackened with clouds of smoke, presented a dark and mournful aspect. The eyes of Paulina, at first dazzled by the glare of the fiery charcoal, and inundated with water, extracted by the sharpness and acidity of the smoke, after a while began to perceive feebly the persons who surrounded her : she beheld several men, whose squalid and uncommon garb increased the terrible expression

pression of their countenances. The same dull sounds still continued, but they appeared much nearer.

Petrified as much by what she heard and saw, as by the hideous figures of those into whose hands she had fallen, Paulina could not conceive the manner of place to which she had been transported ; in vain did she endeavour to collect her wandering senses ; fear wholly possessed her. The inhabitants of this gloomy abode appeared to pay no attention to her ; they were disputing, with much apparent warmth, round the fireplace, and the discordant sounds of their hoarse voices, mingled with the repeated blows which made the caverns resound, formed a sort of bellowing, which was sufficient to have overpowered the soul of any one in her wretched situation.

Paulina was persuaded that she must be the subject of their conversation, and she endeavoured to distinguish some words ; but the deafening noise of incessant blows prevented her. After much warm altercation,

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tion, they all turned round at once, and came towards her. When she saw them approach, the circulation in her veins almost stopped, her head swam, and she fell on her knees, holding out her suppliant hands towards those redoubtable objects. Astonished at her actions, they stopped, and looked attentively at her. Encouraged by the appearance of pity, which she imagined she perceived in them, she exclaimed, in all the wildness of despair—"For mercy's sake! whoever you are, have compassion on an unfortunate person, who never sought to injure any one!"

Those words, pronounced in the most moving tone—the enchanting voice of Paulina—the prepossessing expression of her physiognomy—the supplicating posture which she still retained, produced an instantaneous and favourable effect.

One of the men, who appeared somewhat less ferocious than the rest, advanced, and said to her—"Rise."—At the same time, he held out to her his disgusting hand, which,

which, in spite of her repugnance, she dared not refuse. When she stood up, she trembled so excessively, that she could scarcely support herself; another of the bystanders brought forward the chair which she had quitted, and told her to sit—she obeyed.

“Tell us what brought you hither,” said the person who had just spoken to her, and who appeared to be the chief of the troop; “and remember that truth alone can incline us to pity.”

Paulina began to relate her last mysterious adventure; and as she remarked that she drew forth some sparks of concern, she did not fail to interweave as much of the pathetic as possible. The inhabitants of the bowels of the earth remained silent, and never once interrupted her during her interesting narrative.

When she had finished it, they all retired, without saying a syllable to her, to the spot where they had before assembled. They ranged themselves in a circle, and their
speaker

speaker addressed them at some length. They listened to him with as much attention as they had paid to her; and when he had finished his speech, the debate recommenced with as much warmth as before. Paulina strove to read on their countenances, the opinion which each maintained with respect to her; she saw with pleasure that he who had spoken to her, was one of those who took the greatest share in the debate: her heart whispered her that he took her part, and several of the rest appeared to support him. At length, after a considerable time spent in disputation, she perceived that they were agreed, without being able to guess what was the event.

She looked at the speaker, but dared not ask him the question—she thought he kept at a distance from her. From that moment she thought her death certain; despair chilled her heart, and she sighed out an ejaculation to heaven.

Two of the troop went out through an iron gate which was at one corner of the
subterranean,

subterranean, and Paulina no longer doubted that they were gone to seek the instruments of her death, or at least the chains with which she was to be loaded. Afraid to see any thing more, she hid her face in her hands.

Presently the chief pronounced these words, in a cold and harsh tone of voice—
“Come, Madam, draw near.”

These thundering words pierced her soul through and through, and she thought she heard the voice of Death claiming its victim. She rose slowly, and withdrawing her hands from her eyes, perceived a table lighted by torches ; on the middle stood a skull placed on an old book, the greater part of the leaves of which were wanting ; on one side was placed a pistol, and on the other a dagger. All the troop formed a circle round the table, and the chief advanced towards her, and addressed her in a serious and solemn tone, to the following effect :—

“Banish your fears, Madam ; whatever
may

may be our appearance—whatever our mode of life, we have not thrown aside humanity ; we can feel a concern for the unfortunate, particularly when they happen to be of your sex. My comrades consent to set you free ; but they exact that you take a solemn oath on the book which lies open before you, never to give the least intelligence of the existence of this subterranean. If you should break your oath—if by the slightest hint you should betray us, the pistol and dagger which you behold, denounce the punishment of your treason, and there is no corner where you will be safe from our vengeance.”

Scarcely able to give credit to the joyful news that they were going to set her at liberty, and feeling in her heart the pleasure of a new existence, snatched from the horrors of death, Paulina promised to observe what was required of her. The chief then drew her towards the table, made her place her right hand on the book, her left on the skull, and pronounce a
dreadful

A dreadful oath, which he dictated to her, word by word, whilst two others held to her breast the point of the dagger and the muzzle of the pistol.

When this awful ceremony was finished, the chief said to her, in a more gentle tone than he had before used—"Fear nothing, Madam—now trust to us as we trust to you. I am going to conduct you to the open fields, whence you may easily find your way back to your friends."

Paulina endeavoured to utter her gratitude, but she could scarcely articulate a syllable.

Her conductor lighted a resinous torch, bandaged her eyes, and led her by the arm: they proceeded a long distance, during which her guide gave her every consolation. With satisfaction she heard the sounds, which had terrified her, diminish by degrees; soon afterwards, she perceived that they were on a gentle ascent, and, lastly, that they mounted a staircase. The noise of locks and bolts, and the creaking of hinges,

hinges, announced that she was at the extremity of these horrid subterraneans. She felt the fresh air ; and after having been conducted to some distance, her conductor took the bandage from her eyes, bade her adieu, and soon vanished.

Thus delivered from her immediate fears of death, or, what was worse, dishonour, Paulina at first gave way to an excess of joy, until reflection brought to her mind that her present situation was still sufficiently unpleasant ; alone—without money—without help—without knowing where she was, she knew not on what to determine. She then began to consider that she was, at night, in the midst of a wood, where at every step she was liable to fall again into the hands of her enemy ; that every thing was against her, and nothing in her favour. To avoid these discouraging thoughts, she began to move forwards, without knowing what course to pursue : at every step she experienced new fears ; the shades cast by the moon, the rustling of the leaves, ap-
5 peared

peared to her as enemies whom she saw, or as their footsteps which she heard. Insensibly the day appeared ; she got out of the wood, and found herself in the open country ; then, for the first time, her fears began to dissipate. She met several labourers, who were excessively astonished to see a young woman wander alone ; the disorder of her dress, and the incoherency of her discourse, convinced them that she was some wretched lunatic who had escaped from her friends. Some of them, more feeling than the rest, conducted her to the next village, and shewed her the inn. As she entered the gateway, some company were coming out ; and ashamed to be seen in such a situation, Paulina held down her head, and attempted to pass quickly by them, when she heard a well-known voice exclaim—" My God ! can it be ? It is surely Signora Rosomaski !"

She directed her eyes towards the speaker, and her confusion increased at beholding Justiniano with a lady on each side of him.

Being

Being now convinced that he was not mistaken, Justiniano quitted the ladies, took Paulina by the arm, conducted her into the room whence they had just departed, and desired the ladies to follow them. Justiniano eagerly enquired the cause of Paulina's being at such a distance from Genoa, and in such a situation? and she, eager to clear up any suspicions of her conduct, which himself or his companions might entertain, related the whole of her mysterious and dreadful adventure. When she had ended her narrative, Justiniano asked if she did not know the person from whom she had been thus rescued? She answered in the negative, alledging as a reason, that she was so stupified with horror at the time, and so shocked at the sight of the sanguinary corpse, as totally to deprive her of any curiosity. Justiniano immediately ordered a slight repast and chamber to be prepared for her: she expressed her willingness to partake of the former, but begged to decline taking any repose till she

she reached home, as she knew every moment of her absence would be an age of grief to her parents.

Justiniano, however, prevailed upon her to defer her journey till after she had taken the repose of which she so much stood in need, by informing her that he was about to send off an express to Genoa, and that the messenger should call first upon her parents, and wait to conduct them to her. Justiniano then, to the infinite surprise of Paulina, introduced one of the ladies to her as his new bride, and the other as a friend of the bride. Paulina congratulated the bride and bridegroom; and after having taken some refreshment, retired to rest, and fatigue and sleep soon buried her in a happy oblivion of the past.

On that and the preceding day, Rosomaski had wandered about the streets and environs of Genoa, like a poor planet-struck wretch; at times, he would return to hear if any news of Paulina had arrived, and to comfort with those hopes which he himself

did not entertain. He had just returned from one of those excursions, fatigued and despairing ; he had exhausted all his sources of feigned hopes, and was weeping in concert with Rhodiska, when a messenger arrived to announce that Signora Manzana wished to see him that moment, on business which would admit of no delay. This message revived the jealousy of Rhodiska ; she looked stedfastly at Rosomaski, and said—" I have never heard that name before ; have you made any acquaintance unknown to me ?"

" I cannot stay to answer that question now," replied Rosomaski, very much confused, and with a little degree of impatience, and he hurried out of the room.

This seeming unkindness, at such a season, overpowered the little remaining strength of Rhodiska, and stretched her on the floor, in which situation she was found by the tender Agatha, who was never out of hearing, but always at hand to partake either of their joy or grief. She knelt
down

down by her mistress, cried, sobbed, chafed her temples; but finding these modes ineffectual, she got up—ran to the door—called for assistance—raved about the room—then got on her knees again, and redoubled her assiduities. To her inexpressible joy, Rhodiska, after a long interval, began to give signs of returning animation. When she opened her eyes, she beheld all the excesses of the good Agatha, and, in the midst of the surrounding gloom, she cast an affectionate look at her. Seeing that she endeavoured to speak, Agatha drew nearer to her; Rhodiska squeezed her hand, and said faintly—“Adieu! my faithful Agatha! this last blow has cut my thread of life in twain!”

“Heaven forbid!” replied Agatha: “be comforted, my dear mistress; your Paulina will be restored to you—something whispers me that she will soon be found.”

“She is found!” exclaimed Rosomaski, bursting into the room with a letter in his hand, and animation in his wan countenance.

nance. The sight of Rhodiska, pale and livid, supported by the domestics, instantly struck him; in an instant he was on his knees before her, crying out—"My Rhodiska!—my life!—all is well—our Paulina is restored to us!"

"Where is she?" said Rhodiska faintly.

"She is at some distance, under the care of Justiniano, whom we have wrongfully suspected."

Rosomaski then dismissed all the domestics except Agatha, and read the contents of the letter, which he held in his hand, and which were as follow:—

"MADAM,

"Forgive the effects of my love and impatience, which have urged me to prevail upon your daughter to bestow her hand upon me without consulting you. We have gone through all the forms of wedlock."

"Has

"Has Paulina then," cried Rhodiska, interrupting Rosomaski, "been capable of such a breach of duty—of such black ingratitude towards our benefactor, Giovanni?"

"No, no, my Rhodiska," replied Rosomaski; "the confusion into which the joyful intelligence contained in this letter has thrown me, has made me forget to premise to you that it is addressed to Signora Manzanera, from whom I received a message just now."

"Who are this Signora Manzanera and her daughter?" said Rhodiska.

"I know no more of them myself," replied Rosomaski, "than that they are very worthy people, esteemed by our friend Giovanni: you will know every thing about them when he returns."

The reader should be acquainted that these were the two ladies whom Giovanni recommended to the care of Rosomaski on the eve of setting out for Paris. As Rhodiska

diska said no more, Rosomaski finished reading the letter thus:—

“ I flatter myself that you will have no objection to our union, except its being entered into without the approbation of your friend and my brother ; but I am confident that he will be delighted with it. We should have been on our route homewards at this minute, but for a strange adventure which has happened to the daughter of your acquaintance, Count Rosomaski, whom we met with under very distressing circumstances ; but she has suffered no other injury than what a little repose will easily repair ; that she is now taking, on my promise to give the earliest information of her safety to her parents. I need not intreat you to send to them instantly, and to let them know that the bearer of this waits to conduct them to their daughter. This
evening

evening you will behold your daughter and son-in-law at your feet, to crave your blessing.

“JUSTINIANO.”

“Order the carriage,” said Rhodiska; “you shall not wait for me.”

In less than a quarter of an hour the carriage was ready; Rhodiska and Rosomaski entered it, and the coachman was ordered to follow the guide with all possible expedition. As the distance was not more than five leagues, they reached the inn at the end of two hours, and Rosomaski informed Justiniano and his bride, that their mother lamented their precipitancy in not giving her time to consult her friend Giovanni, as she ought to have done; but that, since their fault was committed, she forgave, and was ready to receive them to her arms.

After congratulating the bride and bride-
K 4 groom,

groom, the impatience of Rhodiska and Rosomaski to know somewhat of their daughter's misfortune, was satisfied by Justiniano, who repeated the whole of her distressing narrative. During the recital, Rhodiska's eyes poured out a deluge of tears, and Rosomaski gave vent to his indignation by frequent ejaculations. When Justiniano came to that part where Paulina beheld the female with her ensanguined dagger pointing to the corpse of her foe, Rosomaski exclaimed—"By heavens she is a brave girl; I would rather kneel to her than any female saint in the whole calendar!"

"This is a very mysterious affair," said Rosomaski, when Justiniano had come to the end; it would have been some satisfaction to us if we had known who was the horrid perpetrator of it. I wish Paulina had assumed the courage——"

"In my opinion," said Justiniano, "it would have been of very little consequence to have known him, since he has been so
severely

severely punished, and the attempt has proved abortive. You could take no steps to unravel this matter farther, since the oath which your daughter was compelled to take in the subterraneans, and the vengeance which was denounced against a breach of it, would be sufficiently prudential reasons for letting the affair drop; it should only serve to make you more cautious till my brother's return, which will put an end to all your fears, and the hopes of your enemies."

These reasons were satisfactory, and secrecy was agreed upon.

Shortly after, Paulina awoke, and her first enquiry was, whether the messenger was returned? she was no sooner answered in the affirmative, and that a lady and gentleman had accompanied him, than she hurried on her clothes, and in an instant was in the arms first of her mother, and then of her father. For a while the powers of speech were denied to all three, and the rest of the groupe beheld this affecting

scene with admiration, whilst their cheeks were bedewed with the sympathetic tear.

When the tide of joy began to ebb a little, Justiniano ordered a hasty repast to be put before them, and preparations to be made for their return. The whole party arrived, before sunset, within the walls of Genoa, without meeting with any accident to impair their present happiness.

Justiniano, at the instigation of his bride, requested the Rosomaskis to be present at the interview between her mother and them, and they thought themselves under too much obligation, on Paulina's account, to excuse themselves. Signora Manzanera received the new-married couple as a parent, and their companions as friends, particularly when she was informed that two of the strange ladies were the wife and daughter of Rosomaski, the friend of Giovanni.—Rhodiska and Paulina were delighted with her affability, at the same time that they were struck with her dignified deportment, which bespoke her to have moved in a much higher

higher sphere of life than that in which they now beheld her.

The coldness of a first introduction seldom lasts long with well-bred people; that of Signora Manzanera, Rhodiska, and Paulina, soon wore off. In the course of conversation, Rhodiska told the former that she never had received any occasion for being angry with her husband but on her account.

“How so?” replied Signora Manzanera.

“Because I have to-day learnt, for the first time, that he has enjoyed your acquaintance for a while, without suffering me to be a sharer in his happiness.”

“I assure you,” replied Signora Manzanera, “that I should pick a quarrel with him on the same account, if I were a stranger to the motives on which he acted. You must know, Madam, that there did exist some particular reasons why I wished our abode to be kept a secret from every one; but these reasons are now at an end.”

“Yes, Madam,” said Justiniano to Rho-

diska, "and I am happy they are so, since they were only intended to keep me in ignorance of the place where my treasure was deposited."

As he pronounced the latter part of his speech, he looked significantly at his bride.

"I am likewise happy that they no longer exist," said Rhodiska.

"And I too," said Signora Manzanera, "since they have debarred me of such agreeable company."

In short, in the space of an hour, these ladies were high in each other's esteem; and they parted with regret, as Rosomaski alledged that he did not think it safe to be abroad at night, after the late atrocious attempt. Signora Manzanera could not but admit of their prudence, and told them they had made a troublesome acquaintance, as she should not fail to call upon them the very next, and perhaps every following day.

"Not oftener than we shall be delighted to see you," replied Rhodiska.

The

The first enquiry which the Rosomaskis made on entering Giovanni's door, was, whether he was returned, and they received a negative, which would have damped their spirits, but for the heartfelt joy which these honest people testified at Paulina's return. They loved their master—they had long known where his happiness was concentrated—they had mourned his lost treasure as their own, and they now hailed its return as if their own happiness had been at stake. It would be impossible to set down the inarticulate sounds, and to describe the gestures of honest Agatha, who had been impatiently waiting their return in the front of the house, and was the first to greet them. Suffice it to say, that she was at times in the pathetic—the plaintive—the dolorous—the rapturous—the ludicrous—the extravagant, until she had veered round to every point of the dramatic compass of stage effect. When her ecstasy had given way to sober reason, she lighted the Rosomaskis to their own residence. As they

5 crossed

crossed the garden, Paulina trembled so excessively, that she had need of her being supported on both sides by her parents; she averted her head from the once favourite spot where she had been surprised, and her mind was nearly as much agitated at the recollection, as it had been at the transaction itself. As they were all fatigued, they immediately retired to their chambers, Rhodiska and Rosomaski to repose themselves, and Paulina to discourse once more with Agatha respecting her master.

The next morning, Rosomaski thought it would be proper to call upon Gramani, to put a stop to his further inquiries after Paulina, and to thank him for all the trouble, which he had been at upon the occasion. He was informed that Gramani was not yet returned from the country. When he returned home, he found Justiniano, his wife, and Signora Manzanera, with Rhodiska and Paulina.

Justiniano was not a little surprised to hear that Gramani had been so long absent.
from

from home ; he knew that the Piombinos and Gramani were acting in concert to break off the match between his brother and Paulina, and he began to suspect that they had been the authors of the late affair. As the time was elapsed when, according to his brother's last letter to the Rosomaskis, and the common rate of travelling, he ought to have arrived in Genoa, Justiniano was not very tranquil as to his fate ; he was aware that the Piombinos were equal to any undertaking, however atrocious, which promised success to their schemes, but he would not again disturb the peace of the Rosomaskis by any gloomy surmises. Besides, two or three days must throw some light on all these mysteries ; if Gramani did not then return, he might be presumed to have been the person who was poniarded in the attempt to violate Paulina. If he again made his appearance, Justiniano resolved to have him and the Piombinos strictly watched, to prevent any attempt against his brother.

Without

Without mentioning his design to Rosomaski, he called on him the next morning, and accompanied him to Gramani's house, where they received the same answer—that he was not yet returned. Justiniano's suspicions that Gramani had met with the just reward of his treachery, were strengthened, but he did not yet think proper to open his mind to Rosomaski on the subject.

He accompanied Rosomaski to Gramani's on the next morning, and they still received a similar answer.

"I doubt whether he will ever return," said Justiniano to Rosomaski.

"Why so?" said Rosomaski.

"It is only a conjecture," replied Justiniano; "time will discover whether it be right or wrong."

On the fourth morning they repeated their visit, and were informed that Gramani had returned about an hour before, but so exhausted with fatigue, and bruised by his horse falling with him in the mountains, that

that he had immediately gone to bed, and given positive orders not to be disturbed, on any account whatever, till the evening.

When it arrived, Justiniano and Rosomaski renewed their visit, and were introduced into Gramani's chamber, where he was still in bed. He repeated the same story as the domestic had told them in the morning; and when Rosomaski expressed his gratitude for the trouble he had taken on his daughter's account, and his sorrow for the accident he had met with, Gramani answered, that if he had not succeeded in his endeavours, at least he had done every thing in his power.

Justiniano and Rosomaski could not help remarking the deathlike paleness which clouded the face of Gramani; and the latter observed to him, that he was afraid he had received more injury from his fall than he was aware of. Gramani replied, that it was principally confined to his leg, which his surgeon had recommended to him not to use for some days: then, as if
anxious

anxious to change the discourse, he asked whether Giovanni was returned? and being answered in the negative, he observed, that probably he had been detained at Paris longer than he expected. He could, however, have given them a more probable conjecture.

CHAP. X.

GIOVANNI was, at that very time, pursuing his journey towards Genoa with all the impatience of a lover, attended by only one trusty domestic, named Tomaso. He had approached within some few leagues of his destination, when night came on, and he was glad to perceive, at the foot of
the

the mountains, on the side opposite to that city, a house not far from the road, which, from the number of people who were seated before the door drinking, as is usual in that mild climate, he imagined to be a house of entertainment. He was not mistaken ; the landlord received him civilly at the door, and introduced him into the only room appropriated to the reception of company, of whom it was then full. The next thing was, to place before him a bottle of excellent sparkling white wine, which, in its qualities, resembled Champaign, and was very little inferior to it.

Whilst Tomaso was taking care of the horses, Giovanni was employed in observing the dress, manners, and conversation of the company, who were of that description which would immediately impress one with the idea of banditti, especially in the neighbourhood of mountains, which had been for a long time infested by as daring a gang as ever were assembled together ; they consisted of men of desperate
fortunes

fortunes and resolutions, collected from Genoa and all the neighbouring places. They did not confine their depredations to the mountains, but carried them even to the walls of that city; and examples were not wanting of their liberating their comrades, when seized by the sbirri (police officers) even within the walls. No force had been sufficient to expel them from their strong and secret holds in the mountains; and they were so sure to assassinate all those who seized, and even the judges who should be hardy enough to convict, their associates, that when it was known any of them were in custody, the sbirri would prefer letting them escape, to running the risk of the revenge of their comrades, and the magistrates would connive at their doing so. But to return to our company:—Their faces, whenever they could be seen, were strongly characteristic of savage ferocity; but that was but seldom, as their hats, which they kept on their heads, were very large, and could be made to come over the whole

whole of it upon occasion. Over their other dress, which consisted of a short jacket, Spanish *culotte*, and boots, they wore a capotta, or great coat, of coarse dark cloth, lined with black sheep-skin, which, when it fell open, as was sometimes the case, discovered a belt, to which were attached a brace of pistols, a stiletto, and a hanger. Their words and gestures were of a piece with their dress and appearance, as they talked familiarly of engagements, gun-shots, and dagger-thrusts: their aspects and demeanor grew more terrible as the wine circulated; and they talked of nothing but of attacks, retreats, and lurking-places in the caverns and overhanging precipices of the mountains. It may be readily believed that Giovanni was not very well pleased with his having fallen into such company, and that he would have preferred remaining under the canopy of heaven during the night, to finding a shelter beneath a roof with such guests: he was equally afraid to remain, or to depart,

as

as they might easily pursue and overpower him in the mountains. Whilst he was ruminating on the best method of extricating himself from this dilemma, he was all at once aroused from his reverie by the civility of one of these persons, who drank to the very good health of Signor the traveller. Giovanni thought proper to return the salute in a frank and familiar manner. The same person then addressed himself in a similar manner to another guest, who had hitherto escaped Giovanni's notice, and who only returned the courtesy by a nod of his head, without uttering a single word. The appearance of this latter person was equally singular as that of the other guests, but vastly different; the lines of his face were strongly marked, and a physiognomist would have augured unfavourably of his disposition from them. His dress was a dark green frock, and pantaloons of the same colour, with Hussar boots, and a scymetar hung by his side: it appeared to Giovanni to be the military uniform

uniform of some foreign country, for he had seen none of his own that resembled it: his cloak, which was of grey cloth, trimmed with fur, bespoke him as having come from the North; and from his profound taciturnity, Giovanni concluded that he was ignorant of their language. To assure himself whether it was so or not, Giovanni addressed him in Italian, and asked him which way he was travelling? but, to his surprise, the stranger smiled, and replied that he came from Russia, and was on his route to the city of Genoa: and after having expressed his pleasure that he had fallen in with some one with whom he could converse, he asked Giovanni the same question, who replied that he was on his route from Paris to Genoa, his native place; and as he presumed he had never been in the latter city, he made him the offer of his house and his services during his stay there. To this friendly offer the stranger made a suitable reply, and

and a general conversation ensued between them.

It was not long, however, before they were interrupted by the other guests, who offered to accompany and conduct them safely across the mountains, and to defend them from robbers and assassins. Giovanni thanked them for their offer, but declined it, alledging that he had little to lose, and harboured no apprehensions of an attack. He added, taking out his purse, that he had only thirty crowns left, the half of which would be more than sufficient to carry him to Genoa, where he lived, and they were welcome to the other half, if it would contribute towards their mirth. They readily accepted the offer which Giovanni made, in order to leave them no temptation to plunder ; and taking up the fifteen crowns, they renewed their proposal of acting as guides and protectors, in return for so much generosity ; but Giovanni told them that he had no intention to depart that night,
and

and he would consider whether or not he should accept their services in the morning. With this answer they appeared perfectly satisfied, and again fell to carousing.

As they were very intent on the business in hand, and extremely vociferous, Giovanni, perceiving there would be no danger of being overheard, demanded of the traveller (who called himself Dolgorucki, what was his opinion of their companions? Dolgorucki replied, that, not knowing a single word of their conversation, he had been able to judge them only from their appearance and manners, which were suspicious enough to make him wish to be fairly rid of them. Tomaso had entered just at this moment; and hearing what had been the subject of the conversation, he immediately cleared up their apprehensions in great measure, by informing them that, whilst he had been rubbing down the horses, he had entered into conversation with the ostler, who was employed in a similar manner in taking care of the horses of the rest

of the guests, and had learned from him that they were unlicensed dealers (smugglers), who went about thus disguised and armed, to escape the prying eyes of the custom-house officers and sbirri, and to defend themselves in case of an attempt to seize their contraband goods.

Although Giovanni was extremely glad to find they were no worse, yet even that was bad enough, to make him wish himself at a distance from them ; he dreaded lest the liquor might inflame their natural ferocity, and create some dispute, in which every one present might be involved. He mentioned this apprehension to Dolgorucki, and proposed to him to concert together some method of slipping away unobserved by them. Dolgorucki, after some little hesitation, said, that as they were smugglers, they would in all probability set off about their concerns when the night grew more advanced ; and as the moon would be up, they themselves might take the opportunity of setting out soon after
the

the coast was clear, by which means they should get across the mountains before their troublesome guests could come back. Giovanni relished this scheme exceedingly, and ordered Tomaso to feed the horses very well, and refresh them in the best manner for resuming their journey in an hour or two, without saying a word of their intention.

The smugglers stuck to their bottle with the utmost pertinacity ; and Giovanni remarked, to his new companion, on the excessive pleasure which they appeared to derive from their tumultuous merriment and drunken debauchery, in spite of all the dangers to which their mode of life necessarily exposed them.

“ Those dangers are the very cause of it,” replied Dolgorucki ; “ drinking is the failing of men whose lives are chequered by vicissitudes of toil and ease, danger and pleasure. It is habitual to soldiers, sailors, and to those who live by the chase, as we learn by the American Indians, who, in

their grand huntings, which are in the depths of a hyperborean winter, encounter the most excessive hardships, and afterwards think to recompense themselves by bartering their furs for spirituous liquors: they find in them a temporary relief from past fatigues, and drown all sense of dangers in these Lethean draughts. As their lives are only held by a most precarious tenure, they resort to those means which will put them in the speediest road to pleasure; and having imagined they have found them in strong liquors, they neglect no opportunity of enjoying them."

"Your observation is certainly just," said Giovanni; "sobriety is, I believe, an artificial virtue, depending more on situation than on temperament or character. Those who are never appalled by danger, nor exhausted by fatigue, whose lives are one continued monotonous ease, know not the joys of deliverance, or of repose. But I fear lest those people will be so very assiduous in forgetting past dangers,

dangers, that they will totally unfit themselves for new ones, and be incapacitated for a nocturnal ramble, at least for this night."

"They know very well what they have to do," replied Dolgorucki, "and you need not be apprehensive of their neglecting it."

Dolgorucki was perfectly right in his opinion: about an hour afterwards, they heard a whistle from the outside of the house, and every one of the smugglers cried—"To horse!"—and starting up, emptied the bottles which were before them, as they waited for their horses to be led out. After having wished Giovanni a good night, and told him they should await his commands in the morning, they all disappeared. In a few minutes they were mounted, and rode off.

After they had been gone about half an hour, Giovanni asked what sort of weather it was, and being told that it was a beautiful night, and the moon shone very

L 3

bright,

bright, he summoned the landlord, and informed him that as he wanted to be in Genoa early on the next day, he had altered his resolution of tarrying the night, and should instantly set out again, so soon as the horses could be got ready. The landlord made a great deal of the danger of their losing themselves in the mountains, and of their meeting with the banditti; but Giovanni answered, that they should run greater risk from the banditti by day, as they would not think of meeting with travellers so late at night: besides, by daybreak, they should have got beyond the mountains, and be out of their reach—he therefore desired the landlord to make his charge. The worthy host was determined that this alteration in the minds of his guests should make none in his bill; and he consoled himself for their going away, by charging them as much as if they had staid. Giovanni paid it without questioning. Dolgorucki demanded his carbine, which the landlord brought him, and helped him to sling

slung it over his shoulder. Tomaso led out the horses to the door, and they mounted, and rode off.

The night, which is almost always fine in that climate, was at that time rather brighter than usual, as the lustre of the governess of the night was not obscured by a single invidious cloud. They had travelled two hours, and nearly crossed about half of the mountains, without meeting with the least occurrence to excite their apprehensions: they were even congratulating themselves on having so well escaped from their late companions at the inn, when Tomaso, who had kept himself rather in the rear, rode up to Giovanni, and made him observe something at a distance in the forest, which skirted the road on either side. The object to which Tomaso pointed, resembled the figure of a man on horseback. Tomaso informed him that he had observed the same appearance for some time past; during which, it had kept pace with them, and seemed to govern its mo-

tions by their own ; that he was at first doubtful whether the shades of the trunks and branches of the trees might not deceive his eyes, and would not say any thing, lest they might attribute his visions to fear, and laugh at him ; but he was now satisfied, from the constant attendance of the same appearance, that he was not deceived, and thought proper to put them on their guard. Giovanni proposed that they should stop, and observe if the appearance did the same. They halted, and it also became stationary ; they then moved on, and it renewed its course in a parallel direction. Dolgorucki desired Giovanni and Tomaso to halt again and wait for him, and unslinging his carbine, he plunged into the forest, and rode briskly towards the appearance, which no sooner perceived his approach, than it galloped off ; but being seemingly better acquainted with the mazes of it than its pursuer, was presently out of sight. Dolgorucki finding pursuit useless, returned to his companions, and told them

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he was certain that what had excited their alarm, was certainly a man on horseback, as he had plainly distinguished the sounds of the horse's feet as he galloped away : he added, that he believed he was near enough to have brought him down with his carbine, but that a moment's reflection had made him desist from firing, lest it might alarm any of the lurking comrades of the fugitive. A council was now held, to consider whether they should proceed or turn back. Dolgorucki demanded how far they had yet to go before they should get clear of the mountains, and Giovanni replied, that they had about the same distance to the foot of the mountains as they had already come from the inn.

“ Then,” said Dolgorucki, “ my advice is to proceed : if the man we have seen belong to a band of banditti, they have undoubtedly cut off our retreat, and are only waiting to get us into a place favourable to them to surround us. Let us move gently on, so as not to fatigue our horses,

and be ready to act as circumstances may require. I am used to these nocturnal marches and skirmishes, and I know that if a forest is a proper place to make an attack, it is almost equally convenient to elude one."

They again went forwards, and the same shadow haunted them, but it kept at a greater distance than before. In a short time they opened a plain about a quarter of a mile wide, through the centre of which their road lay, and which terminated in a narrow defile, like that by which they had arrived at the plain. They now beheld the supposed spy more clearly as he quitted the forest, and rode abreast of them on the open plain; but he kept close to it, as if ready to re-enter it on the least appearance of a pursuit. Giovanno's party again halted, and he followed their example: they halloed to him, but he returned no answer. Dolgorucki again rode towards him, and he instantly fled into the forest. Dolgorucki returned, and they went on:

in a little time they saw the man resume his station. When they approached the end of the plain, where the forest came close to the road on both sides, he quickened his pace, and got before them.

“If they meditate any attack upon us,” said Dolgorucki, “they mean to put it in execution in the narrow road before us, and the look-out is now pushing on to inform his comrades of our approach: they will have the advantage of rushing out upon us from some thicket.”

“What is to be done?” demanded Giovanni.

“I am used to stratagems and dangers,” answered Dolgorucki; “and if you be governed by me, I will put in practice a well-known expedient among military men to discover if any ambush is intended, and to break up their designs.”

“Do you be our leader,” said Giovanni, “and we will conform to all your orders.”

“Then do exactly as you see me do,” said Dolgorucki.

At these words, he turned about his horse and galloped back across the plain, the same road as they came. Giovanni and Tomaso followed, and they had no sooner got to the end of it, than stopping and looking back, they beheld a party of seven or eight horsemen, who were pushing after them in full speed.

“ We have escaped the first snare,” said Dolgorucki ; “ now follow me again.”

So saying, he galloped a little way on the narrow part of the road, until they were concealed by the trees from the sight of their pursuers, and instantly turned short on the right hand into the forest. They continued their course with as much speed as the intervening trees would admit of, until they discovered a very close thicket, into the midst of which Dolgorucki plunged, and his comrades followed him; they then listened attentively for a while, but could hear no sounds of their pursuers.

“ You may now see,” said Dolgorucki,
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in a low tone of voice, “ the reason of my conduct. I knew that by making a quick retreat, the lurkers, if there were any before us, would fear to lose their prey, and quit their ambush to follow us : if there had been any in our rear, they would have faced us to intercept our retreat, and I would have then stopped short, and have dashed into the forest on one side or the other, where we might stand a chance of escaping from them. When they come to the end of the plain, they will most naturally conclude that we have kept on the road ; at least, if they should suspect that we have quitted it, they will be at a loss to imagine which side we have taken, and may take the wrong as well as the right : if they separate, we shall have the less odds to encounter with, if they should overtake us. Let us now alight to give breath to our horses ; and if we hear them approach, we will remount, and shall have the advantage of having our horses fresher

fresher than theirs, which will be jaded with a constant pursuit."

They instantly dismounted, and let their horses graze, each one holding his own by the bridle, in readiness to start upon the first alarm.

"You have managed this retreat like a skilful leader," said Giovanno.

"I have already told you," replied Dolgorucki, "that I am used to affairs of this kind; and if the being exposed to danger does not make a man more brave than he naturally is, yet it certainly gives him the advantage of being more cool and collected, which, on all occasions where we have a superior enemy to contend with, is of more real service than courage: by a well timed retreat, the foe may be divided, and the odds be reduced."

"I know nothing of the art of war," said Giovanno, "but what I have gleaned from books; but it is easy to be seen, by what we have just escaped, that a cool
head

head may effect what an intrepid hand would have failed in."

When an hour had passed without hearing any sounds whatever, Dolgorucki proposed to remount, and by continuing to keep to the right, to pursue their course towards Genoa, without getting into the main road. Skirting, therefore, the plain where they had so lately escaped from danger, they rode gently on, until the moon, whose light had been for some time gradually diminishing, totally disappeared, and left them in darkness and uncertainty.

"Well," said Giovanni, "what is to be done now?"

"Nothing," replied Dolgorucki, "but to remain where we are till daybreak. I was in hopes the moon would have lent us her light till we had got over the mountains; but as she could not stay her course for us, we must wait with patience for the sun. The Italian climate is very fine for benighted and unsheltered travellers like ourselves, and our constitutions will not suffer much
by

by passing the short remainder of the night in the open air."

They fastened their horses to a tree, and lay down under another at no great distance. The soldier, to whom such a situation was nothing new, was soon in a sound sleep; and Giovanni and Tomaso were so overcome with fatigue and want of rest, that it was not long before they followed his example.

CHAP. XI.

IN the morning, Dolgorucki was first awake; and he no sooner attempted to rise, than he was surprised to find himself restrained by his legs and arms being pinioned:

pinioned: he instantly turned round, and beheld his companions in a similar plight. On endeavouring to raise his head, he discovered a large party of men seated on the grass, and apparently consulting together: their horses were at no great distance from them, fastened together, and attended by a man, who kept them in readiness to mount at a moment's warning. Dolgorucki contrived to jog Giovanni, who was next to him, and to arouse him from his torpidity. Giovanni also attempted to rise, and was presently convinced of their ill luck.

“The fortune of war is against us,” said Dolgorucki; “all our stratagems have failed us, and yonder are those who have reduced us to captivity.”

Giovanni raised his head, and beheld the party, and he concluded that they were those banditti who inspired the country, even to the walls of Genoa, with terror. One of the party hearing them talk, came
and

and asked them if they chose any thing to eat before they pursued their route?

“Why are we bound?” demanded Giovanni.

“To prevent your escape.”

“For what purpose are we detained?”

“You will know that when we reach our habitation.”

“Where is that?”

“In these mountains.”

“You jeer us by asking us to eat,” said Dolgorucki, “with our hands tied in this manner.”

“Oh, I will soon remove that obstacle: we were only apprehensive of your attempting to escape during the darkness of the night; but we are not afraid of it, now the day has broke.”

He then unbound them, as well as Tomaso, who still slept soundly, without dreaming of the ill fortune which attended his waking: he then conducted them into the interior of the circle formed by his comrades;

rades ; and bidding them sit down, he placed before them some provisions and wine.

Dolgorucki fell to with a soldier's appetite, and Giovanni would have followed his example, but for the idea of his being to be separated, for he knew not how long a time, from his beloved Paulina, whom he hoped to have that very day enlivened with his presence, and to have enjoyed the pleasure with which she would welcome him home. Tomaso, whom hunger troubled more than love, ate to dispel the former, and drank to drown care. When they had finished their repast, the banditti closed round them, and one, whom they called Captain, demanded who they were ?

" I am a Genoese," replied Giovanni : " this person (Tomaso) is my domestic ; and this other (Dolgorucki) is a Russian gentleman, with whom we fell into company by chance last night."

" What is your name?" demanded the Captain, who was the famous robber who
had

had instilled so much terror into the Genoese, known by the name of Boccanegrá.

"I am named Paulo Giovanni," replied he.

"Have a care," said Boccanegra, "of attempting to pass for any other than you are: we shall soon find you out; and if you are caught in a falsehood, your life shall pay for it."

"Be it so," replied Giovanni firmly.

"Do any of you," demanded the Captain, addressing himself to the rest of the banditti, "know the person of Paulo Giovanni?"

"Yes, yes," exclaimed several of them, "we have often seen him, and we believe this to be the person."

"Very well," said the Captain, "he will find his account in telling the truth."—Then turning to Giovanni, he said to him, "We have often heard of Paulo Giovanni; he is a banker, and said to be the richest man in Genoa."

"I have certainly a large property there," said Giovanni.

"So

“ So much the better,” said the Captain, “ for you and us too, as things have turned out. Whence come you, and whither were you going ?”

“ I am on my return from Paris to Genoa,” replied Giovanni.

“ And what brought your Russian companion hither ?”

Giovanni, after having acquainted Dolgorucki in French with what the Captain desired to know, repeated his answer, which was, that he was a Russian officer, who, having fallen under the displeasure of his sovereign, had fled to avoid being sent to the deserts of Siberia, and was on his way to Genoa, at which latter place he intended to embark for America.

“ How came you to pass the night in the mountains ?” said the Captain to Giovanni ; who readily told him their adventure at the inn on the preceding evening, and what had happened since their leaving it.

“ Have you any suspicion,” said the Captain,

Captain, "who the men were who pursued you?"

"Not the least," replied Giovanni; "probably they belonged to your party."

"No, they did not," said the Captain: "on the contrary, when we heard of their lurking hereabouts, we suspected them of being enemies, and sent out a party to bring them in."

The word was now given to mount, and all the party got on horseback, and pursued their course by bye-paths, well known to them, till they came to an obscure valley, which skirted the foot of a mountain much loftier than all the surrounding ones. At the blowing of a horn, a door, so artfully covered with earth and brambles, that every attempt to have discovered it would have proved fruitless, was pushed open in the side of the mountain, and discovered a passage lofty enough for a horse to enter, but not with its rider on it. They all dismounted, and entered one
after

after another into the chasm, the door of which was again closed upon them. The porter, who had opened the door, was followed by another, who carried a torch, and who preceded them as they went through this gloomy subterranean. As they proceeded, the height of the passage increased, and they at length found themselves in a lofty vault, excavated from the solid rock, of which several piles were left at intervals, as pillars to support the immense weight above. In the first vault they left their horses; and proceeding further on through another shorter passage, they arrived at a second vault, which was well lighted, by means of several lamps suspended from iron spikes driven into the rock. The whole formed a solemn scene of gloomy magnificence, such as the ancient poets might have very well feigned for the palace of Pluto and Proserpine.

Shortly after they entered, some bottles of excellent wine, with pipes and tobacco, were brought and spread on the floor; the
banditti

banditti seated themselves in a circle ; and Giovanni and his party were invited to join them, which they did not deem expedient to refuse. The glass went freely round ; and to enliven it, some of the banditti, who were not bad musicians, which is very common amongst all ranks in Italy, played some martial tunes and lively airs, in a manner which would not have offended the ears of an amateur. Catches, glees, and songs, chiefly in praise of their mode of life, were sung at intervals : and after this sort of entertainment had lasted about two hours, it was proposed to finish the slight repose they had taken during the preceding night. Some bundles of clean straw were immediately brought, and strewed on one side of the vault, and all the company lay down, except those who were to be stationed to give alarm, in case of the approach of an enemy or strangers.

In a short time it was very evident to Giovanni that all the banditti were in as
profound

profound a repose as if they had had no foes to fear; and he could not help reflecting on the various modes of life, to which either violent passions or misfortunes are capable of driving men, and on the ideas of happiness which might be enjoyed by even outlaws and proscribed persons. Custom had rendered crime habitual to these persons, and their hair-breadth escapes had brought them to despise danger: although driven from society, and surrounded by enemies, yet they endeavoured to make their situation capable of enjoyment, and even of refinement. These reflections soon gave way to others on his own state. Paulina presented herself to his imagination, uneasy at his delay, and in consternation at the probable cause of it: he thinks he hears her reproach him with his want of ardour in suffering her thus to linger between hope and fear: he sees her at one time dissolved in tears of tenderness; at another, drying them up in anger. He considers what will be the event of this

disastrous adventure, and he endeavours to console himself by believing that, at the worst, a handsome gratuity to the banditti will procure him his release speedily. He was thus amusing himself with hope, the subterfuge of the wretched, when one of the banditti who were upon guard, came in, awoke his comrades, and told them that the scouting party were returned, and had given the signal for admittance.

“Have they been reconnoitred from the watch-tower?” demanded the Captain.

“Yes,” replied the guard, “and all is well: they have brought strangers with them.”

“Admit them then,” said the Captain.

In a few minutes several more of the banditti entered, bringing with them four persons bound with cords.

“Are these of the party whom you were sent to surprise?” demanded the Captain.

“All that remain of them,” replied one of the new comers: “we were obliged to kill three before the rest would surrender.”

Giovanno

Giovanno observed that one of the prisoners had his eye fixed on him, and he looked at him in turn ; he thought his face was not unknown to him, but he could not recollect where he had seen him before. Whilst he was endeavouring to refresh his memory, the Captain ordered the prisoners to be taken to the watch-tower, whither he would follow, and hear what they had to say for themselves.

The prisoners were led up a flight of steps hewn out of the rock, which seemed to lead to the upper part of the mountain, and the Captain followed them. They were no sooner gone than Dolgorucki, who had been asleep, began to rouse himself ; and Giovanni remarked to him, that he did not seem very sensibly affected by his melancholy situation.

“ No,” replied Dolgorucki, “ it is not worth the trouble : man is the sport of Fortune—to-day happy, to-morrow wretched ; at least he thinks himself so ; but he really knows neither what happiness nor wretchedness

edness are: they are both indefinite expressions, and no two of the human race will coincide in the sentiments of each other in that respect. Whatever pleases our own passions, however injurious to those of another, we deem happiness; all that thwarts them, although justice demands it, we call misery. Strictly speaking, we should deem nothing happy, or otherwise, since we are not judges of either. We ourselves do not remain in the same opinion:—for instance, a man shall be desperately in love with a beautiful woman; he shall imagine that all terrestrial happiness is comprized in the possession of her: she shall marry another, and he will for a while suppose himself the greatest wretch in the creation. Time, however, wears away his passion; the woman he thought the most amiable in the world, finding no longer cause to disguise her passions, shall show herself in her true colours; she shall be the torment of her husband, and her admirer shall think himself happy that he
has

has missed her. Thus, no opinion holds good against time, which changes every thing, even our very nature; and what we deem evil, mostly turns out for our good. I consider that, if I am a captive of banditti, I am better off than if I had been banished to the dreary and inhospitable deserts of Siberia, and obliged to hunt, in the first place, for my task-masters, and, in the next, for my own existence: I may get hence, but I could not thence. True fortitude consists in bearing every change of fortune with equanimity, and true happiness is only the art of making the best of every occurrence in life, however bad it may be. Therefore, we should divest ourselves of care, but not of caution."

At these words, the Captain descended from the watch-tower, and said to Giovanni—"Perhaps your falling into our hands has prevented a greater misfortune happening to you: one of those men whom I have been examining, has confessed that he and six others, three of

whom have been killed, were hired by your *good friends*, the Count and Countess del Piombino, and Gramani, to waylay and carry you off to a secret place, in order to break off your intended match with one lady, and to compel you to marry another. They were the persons who pursued you last night, and from whom you so narrowly escaped."

Giovanno turned to Dolgorucki, and told him that his philosophy seemed to have held good in this particular instance; but he was so buried in a reverie, that he appeared to take no notice whatever of what was passing.

"But how," said Giovanno to the Captain, "can our falling into your hands have prevented a greater misfortune, since we had already escaped from them when you found us, and should, before this time, have been safely in Genoa, if you had not stopped us?"

"Very likely not," replied the Captain; "for to make sure work of it, in case you
should

should escape from this advanced party, another was stationed near the walls of the city, who, in all probability, could not have missed you."

"I am not surprised," said Giovanni, "at the Piombinos being engaged in such an affair; but I find some difficulty to credit that Gramani, who is a magistrate, a man of character, and my friend, could be guilty of such an atrocious breach of injustice."

"His own servant, Guarco, who is one of our prisoners," said the Captain, "is my author."

A ray of light now came across Giovanni's mind, and he recollected to have seen the prisoner, whose face he had been in vain endeavouring to call to remembrance, at Gramani's house.

"You hesitate still to believe," continued the Captain; "and the reason is, that you are ignorant of Gramani's real character; but I will inform you of it: banditti, as we are called, yet there is not one amongst us who is so great a robber

as he is ; his whole life has been one continued scene of blood, pillage, and infamy ; he gained his present office by his servility to some *little* great men, and he maintains himself in it by having rendered himself master of all their secrets. You don't, perhaps, recognize Gramani by this description ?”

“ If I had suspected him to be a man of that character,” replied Giovanni, “ I should certainly have avoided speaking to him, much more entering into a familiar acquaintance with him.”

“ Well then,” said the Captain, “ Gramani is exactly the man that I have described ; and as time is no object with us for the present, I will, if you please, relate to you some of the most remarkable incidents of his life, with which I am thoroughly acquainted, for we too have been *friends*, in the common acceptance of the word—that is to say, we have been so intimate as to hate each other most cordially.”

“ I shall

“ I shall be glad to hear you story,” said Giovanni.

“ I must premise to you,” said the Captain, “ that the former part of Gramani’s life is such as he himself related it to me ; the remainder is our conjoint adventures ; for we have levied contributions together on the public, and made it the prey of our industry for many years.”

He then proceeded to relate what follows.

CHAP. XII.

“ GRAMANI was the son of a swineherd, in that part of Transylvania which borders on the Carpathian mountains : his father’s

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trade

trade had not enabled him to lay by any money, so that he was very glad of the offer of a Catholic priest to educate his child for nothing. Though young, Gramani learned Latin tolerably well; yet there was not a week passed without his undergoing a flagellation from his tutor, who mistook, for a wicked disposition, those little tricks of youth which amused himself, and caused his comrades to grin. As he grew bigger, he began to feel himself degraded by those castigations, and he at length cautioned the tutor to desist from them, but he had not prudence sufficient to profit by the warning. Three days afterwards, when the tutor was about to exercise him as usual, the youth caught up a penknife, and made a stroke with it at his stomach; but the tutor, by a sudden and happy turn of his body, received it in a part where it could not be mortal, on the fleshy protuberance of the opposite side. After this exploit, Gramani fled to his father, who paid him, with interest, the flogging which the tutor

owed him, and threatened to make him follow his own occupation of keeping animals as refractory as himself. Gramani, however, left home, and traversed the intervening country till he arrived in France, where, after several petty, juvenile adventures, in which he gave evident proofs of his future genius, adroitness, and industry, which proved him a true son of Mercury, he arrived at Caen. Being totally destitute of the means of gaining his livelihood, he offered himself to the regiment of Navarre, which was then garrisoned in that city; and as he was tall of his age, and a promising youth, he was readily accepted, and inrolled in the grenadiers.

“ In this station he soon shone conspicuously in all the qualities of a true soldier: he drank like a fish—ruled the tennis-courts—levied contributions on unfortunate girls—broke the windows of some tavern or other, at least every three days—crimped as many young men as fell in his way, and ate and drank up all their bounty-money

after they were enrolled—swore as many oaths as all the other grenadiers in the regiment ; in short, he had been fifteen times in prison—had maimed five of his comrades—killed two more, and was resolved to continue the same game, when the Captain took it into his head to strip and dismiss him from the regiment.

“ Unable to bear this disgrace in a town where he had carried so much sway, he left it, and wandered about till he came to Domfront, where he disclosed his pennyless situation to a Capuchin Friar, who, finding him crafty, and not totally unlettered, advised him to take their order, which he did, under the name of Father John of Domfront. When he was in priest's orders, they sent him to preach in the villages and hamlets ; and after having fulfilled this employment two years, he became the director of the superior of a convent of Ursuline Nuns.

“ The superior was a maiden lady of about forty years, who had been handsome
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in her youth, and still preserved the complexion of thirty. She had often confessed to Father John the attacks which she had to resist from the demon of concupiscence, to whom she constantly opposed fasting, prayer, and discipline ; but that these weapons only afforded her a temporary relief, and in a very short space she had the same mortifications to go over again.

“ Father John pitied the fate of the superior, as he did that of all the other unfortunate victims, whom the avarice, policy, or ambition of parents or relatives, and sometimes the wild imagination of blind and inexperienced youth, condemned to a perpetual struggle with nature. It may, however, be guessed that his commiseration was not totally disinterested : it was not long before he prevailed with the superior to try another method, which he proposed to her, of getting rid of the demon.

“ Some few months afterwards, the abbot of Father John’s order, who had been
a mus-

a musqueteer, wished to ease himself of his directorship. One evening, whilst all the rest were in the choir, and they were warming themselves by the fire till supper should be ready, the abbot began a conversation on the subject, and forebade Father John to confess the superior any more. Father John peremptorily refused to obey his orders, and the head seized a cane to strike him. Father John parried the blow with a pot cover which was at hand, and struck him so violent a blow under the ear, that he fell down upon a kettle of boiling water, apparently as much at his ease as if he had been in an easy chair. Father John seeing, after a few minutes, that, contrary to his expectation, the heat did not make him jump up, came near, and pronounced that he was stone dead.

“The cook uttered a dreadful scream at the sound, and fainted away; but Father John, whose nerves were firmer, took the corpse on his shoulders—went out by a back-door, of which the superior had given him

him a key—filled his cowl with stones, and threw him into the river. When he returned, he related the affair to the superior, who was almost terrified to death, lest they should search for, and find him; but Father John desired her to let him remain in her apartment, and fear nothing. As, amongst all religious orders, they conceal such disorders from the world, very little search was made after Father John; and it was soon after reported that both he and the head were gone to distant parts to convert the infidels.

“ The superior concealed Father John more than a month; but as he was obliged, during that time, to hide himself sometimes in a clothes press, and at others under the bed, he grew heartily tired of such a mode of existence: he therefore proposed to the superior to fly to England with him; and the fear of being again exposed to the buffetings of the demon, if the father should leave her, determined her to accompany him. To guard against poverty,

poverty, the superior took with her, besides her own property, eight hundred louis d'or belonging to the community, and they left the convent and the city at midnight. When they reached the sea-coast, they luckily met with a fisherman, who agreed to take them to Jersey, where they married, in order to stifle any little scruples of conscience. That done, they sailed for England; and arriving in London, they hired a house, and lived three months in a good understanding, when an asthma carried off Father John's dear moiety.

“He soon took the resolution of consoling himself with an Irish girl, who lived with him as a servant, and who could understand him only by signs. The bargain was soon struck, but Father John derived very little comfort from it: one evening when he came home, after having amused himself till pretty late at a coffee-house, he found his trunk broken open, and his wife's portion and the little Irish girl vanished.

vanished. Any other person would have been in the phrenzy of despair; but as Father John had learned among the grenadiers to stick at nothing, and to be disconcerted at nothing, he resolved to forget this scurvy trick of fortune, and to seek her smiles elsewhere.

“ Having disposed of his furniture, he went to board with a wine-merchant, who was a Frenchman, and a widower, with an only child, a daughter, named Lucy. In a very short time, Father John grew enamoured with her, and declared his passion in form. Lucy was not displeased, and he proposed to her to accompany him to Paris, where they might enjoy their mutual loves without fear of being interrupted. The girl talked of her duty to her father; but Father John opposed all her scruples so effectually, that, one evening when the old gentleman was absent, she took from his bureau about one thousand guineas, in part of her future portion: Father John took some few trinkets which
happened

happened to suit his pleasure, and they left London under the guidance of the God of Love.

“ Some days after their arrival at Paris, a favourite lap-dog, which Lucy had brought with her, happened to offend the petticoat of the kept-mistress of a Marquis, who lodged in the same house : they beat the dog, and abused Lucy. Father John, who came in during the fracas, cuffed the mistress, and threw the Marquis over the stairs, by which means his arm was fractured. With any other person this affair would have been attended with no very disagreeable consequences ; but as these Marquises are sooner irritated than appeased, this one went to law, suborned witnesses, and threw Father John into a prison. Notwithstanding all that Lucy could do, and there was nothing but what she tried, with the attornies, counsel, and judges, yet she could not obtain his release, until they were convinced that all the money was gone. Lucy then married an old Chevalier

lier of the order of St. Louis; and Father John scraped acquaintance with a captain of a merchant vessel belonging to Marseilles, who had left his vessel at Havre de Grace, and was come to Paris on a law-suit. When that was finished, he invited Father John, who had made him acquainted with his situation, to accompany him to Marseilles, where he had a privateer fitting for sea, and promised to make him his second in command. During two years, Father John made two voyages to Martinique, one to Constantinople, one to Malta, and one to Ragusa. Having been a skilful navigator, the captain, who was grown old, entrusted him with his vessel, and he set sail for Guadaloupe; but when he arrived abreast of Minorca, he was attacked by a Barbary corsair, which outsailed him, and after a most desperate engagement, was obliged to yield to superior force.

“ The captain of the corsair had formerly been an Augustin Friar; and in consideration of their fraternity, he treated
Father

Father John with the greatest kindness. When they arrived at Algiers, the rest of the crew were put in chains, but Father John demanded to be Musselmanized ; and after having been instructed in the law of the prophet, he underwent the operation of circumcision.

“ When Hali Capragli, which was the Musselman name of the captain of the corsair, had disposed of his prizes, and was again ready for sea, he took Father John with him, to cruize on the coast of Spain. After remaining at sea a month, during which they met with no success, they determined to make a descent on some part of Catalonia. The project succeeded beyond their expectation : these two religious men made ninety slaves, pillaged nine churches, five monasteries, numberless dwelling-houses, and collected an immense booty.

“ Hali, for some private reasons, would not return to Algiers, but shaped his course towards Smyrna, where he sold his slaves, property.

property, and vessel, rewarded the crew, and presented Father John with ten thousand piastres. With this money he freighted a vessel, and loaded it with leather, wax, and silk, with which he sailed for Venice. When he got there, he disposed of his cargo to a Jew, who paid him part in cash, and the rest by keeping out of his way. In return, Father John invited his daughter, a young girl of fourteen or fifteen years of age, on board his vessel, and carried her off to Smyrna.

“As soon as he arrived there, he learned that, a few days before, two Jesuits had been burnt for having converted a Musselman, and that his friend Hali had been impaled on suspicion of being immensely rich, and that the Cadi had thought proper to make himself his heir. Upon this intelligence, Father John thought Smyrna no longer a proper residence for *honest* people; and having sold the Jew girl to a dealer in slaves, he embarked for Constantinople. The first part of the voyage was exceedingly

exceedingly prosperous, and they had already entered the Sea of Marmora, when a frightful tempest wrecked the vessel, between Heraclea and Rodesto. Father John and three others had the happiness to get ashore; but they were not fortunate enough to escape a troop of peasants, who left them without a single piastre.

“In this extremity, he thought he could do no better than to go into service, and try his fortune in the Ottoman army. When he arrived there, he offered his services to the General of the true believers, who appointed him to the post of a spy. Father John made three expeditions into the enemy’s camp; for the first of which he received one hundred sequins, for the second one hundred and fifty, and for the third they gave him two hundred bastinadoes on the soles of his feet.

“Eight days after this adventure, the Turks were totally routed by the Imperialists; and whether Father John did not relish his last gratuity, or whether it really hindered

hindered him from running away, he was numbered among the prisoners. He was sent into Hungary, where he again became a Christian, and received two hundred ducats from well-disposed people, besides considerable presents from the godfather and godmother, who imagined they had ensured themselves Paradise at least, by holding a Turk up at the sacred baptismal font.

“ After having made as much as he could of his conversion to Christianity, Father John set off for Paris; and after he had been there about a month, he found himself in very little better condition than the peasants of Rumania had left him: he therefore associated himself with a certain Monsieur Gribandier, who made it a profession to ease the royal minters of as much trouble as possible, by helping them to make a circulating medium. Father John soon became very skilful in this art, till the police becoming jealous of their success, arrested Gribandier one day when

Father

Father John happened luckily to be out of the way, and ungratefully recompensed the trouble he had been at to increase the circulating coin, by hanging him up in the centre of the *Place de la Grève*.

“ This procedure made Father John quit France in indignation ; and he went to Holland, where he became Lutheran, Arminian, Calvinist, Brownist, Baptist, Anabaptist, Socinian, Arian, Quaker, Jew, Deist, and Atheist, as best served his purpose. Being in a country where people were free to *think* as they pleased, he thought they ought also to *act* as they pleased. He began to act ; but some of his acts having displeased the phlegmatic Dutch, they made him dance a saraband opposite to one of their town-halls, marked him with a hot iron on the shoulder blade, and then sent him to saw Brazil wood in a rasp-house.

“ This sort of work being too uniform for a man of his fickle and volatile disposition, he one night set himself about sawing the doors, and effected his escape into the
duchy

duchy of Cleves. Just as he was about to enter into the town of Wesel, he was met by a soldier, who demanded whether he would not serve the king of Prussia?—‘No,’ replied Father John, ‘I will serve nobody—the king of Prussia may serve himself.’

“The soldier, feeling himself affronted by this answer, drew his sword to strike Father John, but he instantly wrested it from him; and making a thrust at him, marched off, without waiting to see what effect it had. As he did not think it prudent, after this adventure, to enter Wesel, he left it on his right hand, and continued his route to Cologne, where he carried on the profession he had learned of Monsieur Gribandier, until he had amassed four hundred ducats, and raised so great an admiration of his abilities, that his modesty made him decline receiving their applause, by leaving the town in the most private manner.

“He took the route to Paris; but having reason to think that his person was recog-

nized there, and that he was too well *espionné* to do much in his profession, he decamped on a country expedition, and we met together at an inn at Senlis. Finding that our pursuits were nearly alike, (for the *chevaliers d'industrie*, like the free-masons, have a mode of penetrating each other,) he began to question me on my past and present pursuits, and I gave him such an account as gave him no mean opinion of me. To show me how far I had gained his confidence, he related to me his own adventures, as I have told them, and we agreed to seek our fortunes together in Russia, a country where we had heard there was more toleration than in France. In order to set out upon our tour with *éclat*, we picked up a silly kind of fellow, named Diego, a Spaniard by birth, who knew nothing besides his *paternoster*, but had every inclination to become a great man.

“ We hastened through Berlin, Dantzic, Königsberg, Riga, and Revel, to Petersburg,

burg, where our *debut* was very unfortunate. We went to a faro-bank, kept by two Italians, who suffered us to win two hundred roubles the first night, but stripped us of those, and all we had in the world, the next day. In a day or two, Father John had made acquaintance with a Jew, and we again took up with that honourable trade of which sovereigns wish to arrogate to themselves the exclusive privilege—that of coining. We were so industrious, that, in a short time, we were in a condition to make a better figure than ever.

“The vast quantity of new coin which got into circulation, surprised and disquieted the government, who offered a reward of five hundred roubles to whoever should discover the authors. We were not uneasy, as we had taken our measures so well, that nothing but a most extraordinary accident could discover us: nevertheless, that accident really happened.

CHAP. XIII.

“ALTHOUGH we lived very well at home, and had laid in a good stock of wine, yet Father John did not let a day pass over without going to some tavern. One afternoon, as usual, he went into a little tippling shop in our neighbourhood, where, having found the mistress, who was a personable woman, alone, he made her some proposal, which she rejected, and he was not satisfied without taking some liberties. The husband came up from a cellar in the mean time, and was going to kill the rude aggressor, but Father John sent him, with a single kick, back into the cellar from whence

whence he came, and shut the door on him. He then renewed his game with the landlady, whilst the poor landlord bawled murder ! fire ! and thieves ! through the grating of the cellar, which looked into the street. The neighbourhood was immediately alarmed, and the guard came. Father John barred the street door, and swore he would kill the first that should enter. The officer of the guard, despising his threats, ordered the soldiers to force the door. They did so ; and Father John, armed with a leg which he had knocked off the table, levelled the first three who advanced upon the pavement. This somewhat abated the courage of the rest, for attempting to force so strong a position ; but they assailed the doors and windows in the back part of the house, and gained admittance in the rear. Father John, however, wheeled about, and defended himself with such desperate resolution, that one half of them had measured their length on the floor before the

other half could overpower him : he was then led off towards the prison.

“ We had heard all this disturbance from the beginning, and Diego was looking out of the window and enjoying the fun, without having the least idea that his master was the cause of it, until he saw them dragging him along the street before the door. He exclaimed—‘ Oh, my dear master ! what are they going to do with you ? ’—and, in the first transport of indignation, he seized a carbine which happened to stand in the room, and discharged it among the mob, luckily without doing any other execution than that of breaking a tailor’s arm. After this exploit, he dropped the carbine in the street, and crept up the chimney. The officer stopped the guard, and ordered ten men to search the house, and bring away the person who had fired the shot. When they came in, they seized the Jew and myself, and demanded, in their jargon, where was the man who
had

had discharged the carbine? The Jew answered that we knew nothing of him. They then began to make a strict search, but not finding the object of it, they forced open the trunks, and found nearly four thousand roubles of our new coinage, which they seized, with the implements. They then renewed their search, and one of the guards took it into his head to look up the chimney, where he discovered Diego, and called to him to come down. The poor Spaniard began to cry to all the Saints in Paradise for protection; but seeing the guard level his musquet, and not caring to be shot like a swallow, he descended: we were then all conducted to prison.

“The next day we were carried before the magistrates; and when one of these gentlemen, by means of a French interpreter, demanded of Father John what had induced him to offer violence to the landlady? he answered—‘Nature.’ The magistrate caused the question to be repeated,

but he would give no other answer. Diego was next interrogated what had provoked him to break the tailor's arm?—"Our holy religion," replied Diego, "which would not let me see with indifference my master, who is a good Catholic, ill used by Greek heretics."

"The Jew was asked next how he came by the false money? He replied, that it was found in trunks belonging to other persons who lodged in the same house, and who, conscious of their guilt, fled out of the back-door as the guard entered the fore one.

"We were interrogated separately and together during several following days, but we would give them no other answer; and as the capital part of coining could not be brought home to us, they condemned us to banishment to Siberia for life.—(Here Dolgorucki shrugged up his shoulders.)—"The sentence was speedily put into execution. I had formed so terrible an idea of passing my life in these deserts——"

"I believe

“ I believe you,” quoth Dolgorucki.

“ That I would have preferred death to ending my days where I imagined there was nothing but an excessively cold region, hard labour, bad victuals, harsh usage, and the company of half-savages—but we found things quite otherwise. There were statesmen, military men, physicians, lawyers, and clerks in public offices, who had deviated from the rules of practice laid down by the Russian code, and philosophers, illuminati, and literati, who had laboured to reform it; and as we were remote from the capital, less attention was paid to the orders of the court, and of the judges, than to humanity. We were, however, obliged to work in the copper mines of Tobolski; but instead of wasting our intervals of rest in sleep or diversions, like enterprising spirits as we were, we soon formed a plot to escape by the way of Tartary, which Father John, who had studied geography, assured us to be practicable.

ticable. We sounded our comrades, to discover who would join us ; but whether habit had depressed their active faculties, and accustomed them to slavery, or they saw only certain death in the enterprize, we found none to our purpose but an Englishman, who still sighed after liberty. We had no little trouble with him, after we had communicated our plot to him, for he was not for skulking away, as he called it, but for falling upon the guards, and mastering them. We, however, determined on the quieter and safer mode of taking French leave ; and having cooled the Englishman, we began to provide ourselves with a carbine each, powder, ball, hatchets, a tinder-box, and an iron kettle. Our poor comrades denied themselves, to give us a store of their dried provisions, and wished us success, although they preferred lingering where they were, to going with us, as they believed, to certain death. All things being ready, we took the advantage

vantage of the soldiers being all drunk with celebrating the birth-day of the Empress, and slipped away at midnight.

“ We proceeded along the left bank of the river Oby*, till we were in the neighbourhood of Kalami†, where we passed the river on a raft of trees, which we put together, and fastened with straps of bark. When we had reached the Kieta‡, we followed its course through the countries of Grutinski and Lodomiria§, and gained the mountains of Krabia, at that part where they meet those of Sania and Belgian. After having crossed these mountains, not without running a great risk of perishing through cold and hunger, we found ourselves in a desert, whence Gramani informed us we had about eighty days journey to Samarcand, the capital of Great Buchary,

* A river which rises in Tartary, and falls into the North Sea.

† A town in South Siberia.

‡ A river which empties itself into the Oby, forty miles below Ostrog.

§ Countries to the south-west of Siberia.

in a western direction, and about the same length of way to the Mogul Empire on the east. He advised us to take the latter route, which was through the desert, rather than follow the former, through inhabited countries, where we might be tracked, overtaken, and reconducted to Siberia. We resolved to follow his advice. Before we ventured upon this ocean of desert, we tarried some days, and employed ourselves in hunting, by which means we procured and smoaked as much meat as all of us could well carry ; and we found that, by this mode of curing animal food, it required no other dressing, and answered very well without bread*. We travelled during several weeks without meeting with a human being : our eyes were then regaled with the sight of a Tartar, who fled from us as fast as his horse-

* The American Indians, who were ignorant of the use of salt before the Europeans came among them, cured all their fish and flesh by smoke only ; and the Anglo-Americans, who learned it from them, practise the same method at this time.

could

could carry him ; but presently returned with his whole horde, amounting to between three or four hundred. They regaled us at first with some sour milk ; but in the end, paid themselves by taking from us our arms and every thing we had.

“ When these *hospitable* folks had left us, we continued our journey with aching hearts, as we had no longer any weapons to procure game for our sustenance : our only resource consisted in herbs, roots, and berries ; and, after a few trials, we became so dextrous at finding them, that I question whether a herd of hogs could have borne away the palm from us. At intervals, we met with other hordes of Tartars, who regaled us with whatever they had, and would no doubt have robbed us like the former one, if we had had any thing to lose. They directed us on our way : and at length, after a most tedious journey, we had the satisfaction of arriving on the confines of the Mogul Empire, and of seeing the habitations of men, though
thinly

thinly scattered. We travelled on to Lahor, where we began to exercise Monsieur Gri-bandier's trade; and we had no sooner exchanged our counterfeits for real money, sufficient to carry us on our journey, than we bade adieu to Lahor, and passed through Nicodar and Syrina, to Delhi: here we soon raised, by our dexterity, a considerable capital, and proceeded to Agra; and thence to Surat, where we found a vessel about to sail for Goa, and embarked. At Goa we found another vessel about to sail for Lisbon; and having taken a passage, we arrived safely in the Tagus.

“ Finding Lisbon likely to suit our purposes, we agreed not to separate, but to continue working at our trade. Although all lodged in the same house, yet to avoid suspicion, Father John and myself, with Diego as our servant, hired an apartment one day, and the Jew and Englishman hired another for themselves on the following, so that we passed for strangers to them. At first, Father John and myself coined the
money,

money, and the Englishman and Jew, who both had a smattering of the Portuguese language, passed it away, getting as much good money in change as they could. In this manner we soon accumulated a handsome sum, without any suspicion or accident, until one night, as the host was carrying to a sick person, our Englishman chanced to meet the procession, and was ordered to kneel down as the rest did, but he swore that he would not kneel down in the dirt to any old wig-box. The expression no sooner escaped his lips, than, like the explosion of a mine, the fury of the bystanders vented itself, first in the epithets of heretic dog ! and afterwards in dirt and stones, so that our comrade was obliged to fly from the fury of the storm. The mob pursued him, and he reached the door of our lodging only just before them. But he did not get off with their hisses, revilings, and peltings : about midnight, whilst he was in a deep sleep, he was awakened by a hearty shake of the shoulder ; and on opening

opening his eyes, he beheld several men, one of whom ordered him, in the name of the Holy Inquisition, to rise instantly and go with them.

“ The Englishman swore he would not quit his bed at that time of night for the Holy Office or the devil ; but the officers pulled him out, and obliged him to dress himself, by threatening, if he did not, to carry him away in a blanket, or even in *statu quo*. The Jew happened fortunately to be in our room that night, helping us in our labours ; and as the room was separated from theirs only by a thin partition, we overheard every syllable that was uttered. At the sound of the words ‘ Holy Office,’ the Jew turned pale as a corpse ; and dropping an empty crucible which he was going to put on the fire, he said, in a low tone of voice—‘ Save me, O God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for the shadows of the valley of death have beset me !’

At length we had the pleasure to hear them carry away the Englishman without making

making any further search; and when the street-door was again fastened, Father John burst into a loud fit of laughter, and exclaimed—‘He will never trouble us more, and we may as well be his heirs as the Inquisitors.’

“He was mistaken, however; for, finding business brisk, we had no thoughts of decamping, at the end of three weeks after the accident, when one night, or, rather, morning, as we were all busy in clipping, filing, melting, and stamping, for the good of the nation, we were thunderstruck by a violent knocking at the door. The Jew, who had been haunted by the Inquisition ever since they paid their respects to the Englishman, believed his turn was now come, and instantly fell senseless on the floor. We sent Diego to look out of the window, whilst we concealed our effects in the bed; and in a few minutes he cried out, with a tremulous voice, that the Englishman had already expiated his heresy on the rack, and that his ghost was at the door.

door. Father John, who would rather it had been his ghost than his *propria persona*, as he would have no restitution to make it, went to the window himself; and having wished the Englishman, who continued knocking, to the bottomless pit, he bade him make no more noise, as he would let him in directly. The Englishman no sooner entered the chamber than he begged for a glass of wine without delay, and he drank off a bumper to ‘a speedy meeting between the devil and his agents, the Inquisitors.’ The good Catholic Diego lifted up his eyes, and muttered that he had escaped the Inquisition, yet Heaven would never suffer such blasphemy to go unpunished. After the Englishman had emptied a bottle of wine, he asked for victuals, swearing that he had had a worse time in the infernal dungeon of the Inquisition, than during all our march from Siberia. Whilst Diego was ransacking the cupboard, Father John asked the Englishman what devil had assisted him to make his escape?—‘None,’ replied

replied he, ‘ for the devils and the Inquisitors are all in a league against mankind : such an infernal scene as I have witnessed !’

“ Diego came at that instant with the meat, and the Englishman fell to without uttering another word. When he had eaten, or rather devoured what there was, he asked him what he had seen, and how he had effected his escape, and he gave us the following account.

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